



JPRS Report—

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International Affairs

Brigadier Nair Cautions About Possible U.S. Offensive

92AS0065A Secunderabad *DECCAN CHRONICLE* in English 16 Sep 91 p 10

[Text] New Delhi, Sept. 15 (UNI). India, as an emerging regional power, will have to develop requisite levels of resistance to the demands of a unipolar world.

"It is established that India has manifested the entire range of characteristics that the United States perceives as a possible threat to the new world it aspires to create", writes Brigadier V.K. Nair (retd) in his just published book *War in the Gulf: Lessons for the Third World*.

After the end of the cold war, the United States will try to ensure its unchallenged position, as the world's primary political and military power, and therefore, will coerce any "errant" State in the Third World to conform to its political will Brig Nair says in his book.

India, with its nuclear potential, refusal to sign the Non-proliferation Treaty, its missile programme and defence capability, may become a possible target of the United States.

Brig Nair writes that it is important that the Third World states now create institutions to analyze the global security and technological environment, identify national imperatives and discern the threat that exist.

"Such a body should then provide the political leaders with national policy options and processed data required for mature and meaningful decision making. It is only when such institutions are in place, can Third World countries ensure against self-defeating policies as followed by Saddam Husayn, and fully appreciate the world order in its truly comprehensive perspective," he writes.

He also suggests that India, as an emerging regional power, should constitute a national policy formulating body and a national security agency that can provide a modern government with the quality of advice that is required for sustaining an integrated national growth pattern within a security environment.

At present, the leadership in India operates without the benefit of such an institution and therefore, tends to lack a comprehensive all-round view, Brig Nair says.

He pointed out that India has many advantages that Iraq did not have. Iraq's defeat was greatly contributed by its economic vulnerabilities. India, on the other hand, is well endowed and suitably located and has a comprehensive and fast growing technological and industrial engineering base including weapon producing potential.

An economic embargo cannot be successfully enforced without deploying many times the naval and air resources that the United States mustered against Iraq, he comments.

Brig Nair suggests India should aggressively pursue its missile programme to its rightful conclusion—not as a means of offensive force projection, but to safeguard its vital interests in the event of offensive designs against it.

Brig Nair writes that in any military operation in South Asia, the United States will require forward bases to pre-position their logistics support facilities, and a "host country" from which to launch the air and ground offensive.

In so far as operations against India are concerned, base facilities exist in Saudi Arabia, Diego Garcia and the Philippines.

Host country facilities have been created in Pakistan where the port of Gwadar and numerous airfields have been prepared for such a contingency. The United States could also create host country facilities in Bangladesh, he adds.

Papers Report, Comment on Indo-U.S. Relations

Investors' Interest, Pressler Amendment

92AS0104A Calcutta *THE STATESMAN* in English 20 Sep 91 pp 1, 7

[Excerpt] Mr. John Simmons, an expert in Indo-U.S. trade relations and Senior India Desk Officer at the South Asian Office of the U.S. Department of Commerce in Washington D.C., said in Calcutta on Thursday that investors in the United States were avidly watching the changes in the economic policies initiated by the new Government in India. However, the quantum of investment depended much on the way the policies were implemented. He said that even though the new policies were encouraging for U.S. companies, the latter were rather guarded in their immediate reaction, since the general feeling was that the changes might not be as conducive to foreign investors as they were to the growth of the domestic economy.

Mr. Simmons was speaking at a round-table discussion with representatives of the various chambers of commerce in the city at the USIS [U.S. Information Service]. Explaining the need for a "freer and open market" to attract investors from the United States, Mr. Simmons observed that India had "rather missed the bus" in this respect, especially when compared with Third World countries like Brazil, Indonesia and some Latin American countries.

"India should realize that it was faced with a now-or-never situation. Unless India adjusts itself to the rapidly changing global economic situation in a year or two, foreign investors would look for new pastures elsewhere," he cautioned.

Mr. Simmons described the political situation in India as much more stable than that of Pakistan and felt that U.S. investors should not feel hesitant to invest here. Replying [to] a question on why American investors had shown so much enthusiasm for trade with China, he said that China was a unique case and that the experience of U.S. investors

was not uniformly encouraging in China. He added that the keenness of U.S. traders to invest in a big way in the USSR and in the eastern European countries had nothing to do with the U.S.A.'s political policies towards those countries. The opportunities for "good business" had prompted them to look for markets there.

PTI adds from New Delhi; India today welcomed the decision of the U.S. Congress to drop the move to bring India within the ambit of the Pressler Amendment as was the case with Pakistan.

The move, if successful, would have denied India foreign aid unless it obtained a U.S. presidential certification that it was not developing "additional nuclear explosive device."

The United States last year cut off military and economic aid to Pakistan as President George Bush expressed his inability to certify that Islamabad did not possess nuclear weapons.

An External Affairs Ministry spokesman said that it was a matter of satisfaction that attempts to equate the nuclear programmes of India and Pakistan had been given up by the U.S. Congress.

The spokesman said the U.S. Congress had also dropped the Herger and Burton Amendments from the Foreign Aid Authorization Bill which sought to link the grant of economic assistance to India with its human rights record in Kashmir.

Congress instead retained a Feighan-Solarz formulation which stated that there had been 'gross abuse' of human rights by the militants in Punjab and Kashmir.

The Formulation called upon the Pakistani authorities not to provide arms and training to the militants operating in India's border states, the spokesman added. [passage omitted]

U.S. Defense Team

92AS0104B Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA
in English 25 Sep 91 p 1

[Article by Seema Guha: "U.S. Defence Team for Delhi"]

[Text] New Delhi, 24 Sep (The Times of India News Service)—A high-level U.S. military delegation will be visiting India in January next year for a crucial steering group meeting of top army officials to try to formalise the new thinking in defence co-operation between the two countries.

Both sides are hopeful that the Kickleighter proposals which have been extensively discussed during the recent visit of the Indian army chief, Gen. S.F. Rodrigues, to the United States (the first substantive discussion between the chief of the Indian army and his American counterpart in

a long time) will evolve into a durable mutually beneficial relationship between the military apparatus of the two largest democracies of the world.

Though much has been written about the new-found equation between the Indian and the U.S. defence services, so far it has not progressed beyond the paper on which the proposals were formulated. However, both sides are optimistic. If the present mood continues, chances are that a breakthrough in the sense of a formal agreement can be expected by next year.

The meeting of the steering group will be pivotal in determining what shape this co-operation will take. It is unlikely to result in a defence pact, like what the United States has with the NATO countries, nor on the lines of the Indo-Soviet treaty of friendship. According to reliable sources, it will be in the shape of defining a mutually supporting path towards achieving common objectives for peace and stability in the region. The two sides, it is claimed, will be equal partners.

The thaw in Indo-U.S. military relations began roughly around two years ago, when a seminar on strategic survey was organised in Washington. Senior Indian army officials attended the joint Indo-U.S. seminar. The second annual meeting was held in Pune between 10-12 December 1990. This time, the top brass of the U.S. armed forces reciprocated the Indian visit. Adm. Huntington Hardisty, the commander-in-chief of the U.S. forces in the Pacific (CIN-PAC), attended the Pune conference. India is within his command's geographic jurisdiction.

The Admiral met Gen. Rodrigues for the first time in Pune and the two discussed the potential for greater defence co-operation between their respective countries.

Early this year, Gen. Kickleighter, commander of the U.S. armed forces, assigned to the Pacific, working on Adm. Hardisty's idea of a mutually supportive role between the defence services, drew up a series of proposals and gave it to Gen. Rodrigues for detailed study. Gen. Kickleighter has since retired and is succeeded by Lieutenant-General Corns, while Adm. Hardisty has been replaced by Adm. Larson.

The new U.S. commander-in-chief, Pacific, is expanding these proposals to ensure that the co-operation is not limited just to the army but extends also to the navy and air force. In short, it will not be confined to a merely technical exchange between the security forces, but will call for a political understanding between India and the United States and will have significant implications for New Delhi's foreign policy.

Gen. Rodrigues, who met the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, Gen. Colin Powells, and other top military officials during his rush to Washington, Honolulu and American defence establishments, gave his hosts a fair idea of India's thinking on strategic questions related to the sub-continent as also to the international situation.

CPI-M Criticism

92AS0104C Bombay *THE TIMES OF INDIA*
in English 24 Sep 91 p 3

[Text] Kottayam, 23 Sep (PTI)—The CPI(M) [Communist Party of India-Marxist] general secretary, Mr. E.M.S. Namboodiripad, yesterday alleged American interference in India's internal affairs.

Addressing a public meeting organised by the district unit of the CPI(M) here, he made the allegation that even the budget presented by the Narasimha Rao government recently was prepared in the United States as "dictated" by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

He charged the Centre with becoming more and more subservient to the monopoly houses as desired by the United States.

He said the agitational programmes planned by the CPI(M) on 27 September when the Rao government enters its 100th day in power was to protest against its anti-people policies.

Mr. Namboodiripad said the demand from some quarters including the Congress(I) to dissolve the Communist parties in India in the wake of the developments in the Soviet Union was meaningless as the Communist movement in India had no "blessings either from the Soviet Union or from China for its existence."

He said both the Soviet and Chinese Communist parties had "refused" to recognise the Communist Party (Marxist) for 16 years after the party split in 1964. But it stood on its own foot all along and fought for the people's causes, he added.

He stated that the existence of the CPI(M) was more relevant today to fight against the Congress-I and "other communal forces" like the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] and the Muslim League simultaneously.

Change in Foreign Policy

92AS0104D Bombay *THE TIMES OF INDIA*
in English 24 Sep 91 p 10

[Article by Praful Bidwai: "India Lurches Towards U.S.;" italicized words as published]

[Text] A radical, rapid, far-reaching, but virtually unannounced change has been executed in India's foreign policy over the past few weeks, which realigns this country's relations with the United States in ways never conceived of before. This realignment, based on a "new proximity" or "strategic consensus" between India and the United States, is as decisive as it is dramatic. Indeed, it represents nothing short of a quiet foreign policy coup.

There are several manifestations of this paradigm shift: numerous strategic cooperation agreements being drawn up based upon the Kickleighter proposals; changes in

India's position in the Uruguay round and in the intellectual property regime in the country; and a growing convergence in economic thinking as witnessed in recent IMF talks and at the Aid India Consortium meeting last week.

There is more to come. Already there is talk of extensive naval cooperation, including the matching of naval communication, sharing of contracts in post-Gulf war reconstruction, closer Indo-U.S. coordination in the UN and the Security Council, whose forthcoming session India chairs.

Dramatic Shifts

The foreign policy community is agog with speculation of even more dramatic shifts: the Americans, it is hinted, might even be willing to accept the reality of India's nuclear status if New Delhi is seen to be responding to Pakistani proposals for talks, and agrees to cap its present capability while signing a no-first use agreement with Pakistan.

The accent in the realignment being wrought is not just on "cooperation," but "partnership" and working towards an alliance. That is the spirit in which the proposal named after Lt.-Gen. Claude Kickleighter, formerly of the U.S. Army Pacific, have been made. Nothing else can explain the idea of visits by chiefs of staff, a joint army executive steering council, a staff information exchange, exchange of personnel, "collective training information exchange," "combined training activities" or "co-hosting" of a "Pacific armies management seminar."

All these are indices of something akin to an alliance or at least an exceptionally close wide-ranging partnership which goes well beyond the Indo-Soviet treaty of friendship in scope. The putative gains for India on account of this cooperation or capitulation—depending on one's point of view—are to be located in the U.S. acknowledgement of India as *the* power centre of South Asia, working in close political, economic and strategic coordination with America and under her tutelage.

The new orientation is being ruthlessly pushed through without as much as a policy planning paper, detailed discussions between Sena Bhavan and South Block or cabinet deliberations, leave alone a public debate (or even acknowledgement). Worse, it has been in the making at least since the beginning of the year, i.e. under two successive minority governments without a mandate for such a radical shift.

Clearly this strategic proximity-led foreign policy realignment is much wider in scope than a change warranted by one or more of three factors: the collapse of state Communism, in the USSR (which it largely preceded); seeking U.S. support for the assistance India so desperately needs from the IMF/World Bank; the absence of a well-defined foreign policy enunciator in New Delhi.

The last point is important, given the disastrous performance of the Chandra Shekhar government, the lack of interest and familiarity on Mr. Solanki's part so far as

external affairs go, and the impending retirement of Mr. Muchkund Dubey, the foreign secretary. But it should not be over-emphasised.

Loss of Moorings

The causes for the change should be sought in longer-term factors and processes, five of which are important. First, the end of the Cold War, dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet collapse—all on the West's terms or favouring it—have decisively altered the context in which independent India conducted its foreign policy. The countervailing power to the West has suddenly disappeared, cutting the ground from under the Indian refusal to align firmly with blocs and strategy of taking advantage of the divergence between them.

Secondly, a major premise of Western, in particular U.S. post-war policy, that of the essential viability of the state Communist system, has been rendered invalid. Now the United States need make no more allowances for non-capitalist, non-market political systems or seek to accommodate the concerns of the Third World. This has only added to South Block's sense of helplessness and loss of moorings.

Thirdly, non-alignment is coming apart in the specific physical form of NAM [Nonaligned Movement]: Yugoslavia and Egypt can only figure in a nostalgic account of its past and the Netherlands and Germany, joining as guests, will seal its future such as it is. The simple point is that India has failed to build an alternative structure to NAM. This has increased South Block's disorientation.

Fourthly,—and here we come to “positive” factors—a big rift has opened up between the United States and Pakistan. Not only is “strategic consensus” and joint management of the Mujahideen operation over, Pakistan's place in the U.S. scheme of things is shrinking. A section of New Delhi's policy-makers wish to insert themselves into that vacuum; they are anxious that India should not “miss the bus.” The “bus” is all-American, of course.

And finally, there has been a major change in Indian elite perceptions of this country's place in the world, determined partly by domestic considerations (about which more later) and partly by external factors. This place has steadily contracted in size and importance; the qualitative dimensions of India's role in the world have in elite perceptions been reduced to quantitative, largely economic, parameters. Thus India can command attention to the extent it becomes a roaring Asian tiger itself. To that end—self-evidently the appropriate goal—India must become America's junior partner. This means equating the U.S. with the entire OECD, bloc of advanced capitalist countries.

The effect of all thus is plain: the earlier conjunction between non-alignment and the pursuit of the national interest is dead. India, which for so long—under the irrepressibly moralistic and dangerously Left-inclined Nehru, the implacable Indira Gandhi, the maverick Morarji Desai and the unreliable Rajiv Gandhi—defied

the idea of U.S. tutelage, has finally come around. The prize catch is at last in hand.

With this the United States can put a blanket over the entire history of its own shortsighted South Asia policies and proceed to seal a quasi-alliance with a power it no longer needs to befriend in furtherance of the larger cause.

What India gets in return is pride of position in South Asia, a role larger than Pakistan's during the eighties. The shift thus is not only from non-alignment to its opposite, it is also from a global to a regional role, and from the moral high ground (India as the most vocal representative of the post-war trend of decolonisation and democratisation of international relations and advocate of peace and disarmament) to a cynical and timid brand of “political realism.”

High Status

Implicit in this is a defeatist or resigned acceptance of the reality that with the disappearance of the USSR as a superpower, the possibilities of an “independent” course for the Third World have ended. This “realism” has prevailed because India's foreign policy is no longer based on a doctrine, nor organically linked as in the Nehruvian model to a domestic project of planned modernisation and egalitarian development. *Chez Nehru*, India's claim to a high status in the world community would be based on the originality and grandeur of the great Indian project. Now the project is itself in danger of being abandoned.

One major factor explains this shrinking of vision: the Indian elite is willing to accept a subordinate and purely regional status for the country within a U.S.-prescribed framework of “stability” (read stable external and internal borders) and “democracy i.e. isolating Pakistan), to the point of close strategic cooperation with the United States because it is no longer assured of its authority in South Asia nor confident of nation-building, or even holding the country together on its own, on the basis of persuasion and consensus.

U.S. tutelage is surely not contingent or dispensable for an effete elite which is so bankrupt that it cannot even afford a foreign policy doctrine. It will soon become a fact.

Intellectual Property Stand

92AS0104E Bombay *THE TIMES OF INDIA*
in English 21 Sep 91 p 14

[Editorial Report]

[Text] The statement by more than 250 members of Parliament belonging to different parties on India's stand on intellectual property rights (IPR) is clearly timed with Mr. P. Chidambaram's forthcoming visit to Washington in mind. The commerce minister's mandate is to remove the irritants in Indo-U.S. relations stemming from the decision of U.S. trade representative, Ms. Carla Hills, to initiate investigations against India under U.S. law special-301 precisely on this issue. The MPs [members of Parliament] have demanded that India should not dilute its stand on patents and other matters in the context of the

U.S. threat. The sheer number of the signatories bears witness to the strength of the feeling in this country on this question. It is impossible for a minority government to ignore it, for the issue is connected not only with adherence to India's consistent stand—that such matters can only be meaningfully discussed and decided in multilateral organisations—but also with upholding national sovereignty. In the context of the rapidly changing technological context of the world, it is obvious that India too should be prepared to take necessary legal steps concerning protection of intellectual property. However, as the MPs have pointed out, Indian laws, formulated in consonance with internationally adopted regulations and conventions, cannot be rendered secondary to the laws of another country, powerful though it might be. This is particularly so because of the widespread sentiment in the developing world that, having taken advantage of lax laws on intellectual and other property earlier and climbed up to heights of prosperity, the developed countries in general, and the United States in particular, are now trying to pull up the development ladder after themselves.

The MPs who have signed the statement have also raised another important issue: the ratification of international agreements entered into by the Government of India by Parliament. In a democracy, Parliament is supreme and parliamentary scrutiny of the international commitments made by the government cannot, therefore be bypassed. Indeed, in the world's second largest democracy, the U.S. Congress itself enjoys such a prerogative and exercises it with telling effect. The Parliament of a mature democracy like India must have similar jurisdiction. That will help in removing unnecessary suspicion about the government's actions and intentions, and obviate apprehension of the kind which has prompted an almost unprecedented non-partisan statement on IPR. Since the government has given ample evidence that it is serious about establishing healthy parliamentary conventions and strengthening consensual politics, it should have no difficulty in accepting parliamentary consultations on international agreements.

Analysts Discuss Relations With U.S.

U.S. Strategy Reviewed

92AS0150A Madras *THE HINDU* in English
5 Oct 91 p 8

[Article by Pran Chopra: "New U.S. Focus on South Asia"]

[Text] For four decades American policy towards South Asia oscillated between two positions. Neither was intrinsically hostile to India, but while the first had the effect of producing hostile relations between the two countries, the second also had only the negative virtue of suspending the hostility. But now the focus and purpose of this policy have changed and the change could become the basis of a mutually beneficial relationship between the two countries if both overcame a few remaining hang-ups of the past.

These four decades can be divided into two phases: one in which the United States had close interest in and an active policy towards South Asia; the other in which it was benignly indifferent. The first lasted from around 1950 to about the mid-1960s and again from around 1980 to 1990, a total period of a quarter of a century. The second phase lasted about 15 years, from the mid-1960s to the end of the 1970s.

Common to both phases was, of course, the predominant fact that throughout these four decades, the United States viewed all policies towards all countries through the spectacles of the Cold War and its requirements in terms of its tussle with the Soviet Union. But the two phases differed because these requirements also differed.

Immersed in Cold War

By the time the United States began to take a serious interest in South Asia, it was fully immersed in the Cold War, and, therefore, determined its relations with each country according to whether that country was willing to lend itself wholeheartedly to American purpose in the Cold War or not. Pakistan was, India was not, and both had reasons which had less to do with America than with Kashmir, and additionally, in the case of India, with Nehru's world view, which was later to become the rationale for nonalignment.

During this stage of its military strategy for the confrontation with the Soviet Union, the United States needed a committed ally on the periphery of the enemy. Pakistan became one and the United States rewarded it by supporting it on Kashmir without worrying too greatly about the rights and wrongs of the Kashmir case. The more the United States did so the more India became sullen towards it and occasionally bitter and angry too and the United States reciprocated in kind on a whole range of issues on which Indian and Soviet policies converged. Nonalignment as such was only a secondary cause of this estrangement except in the eyes of those Americans, unfortunately many, who saw nonalignment as crypto-communism or those who believed that anyone who was not an ally must be treated as an enemy.

Then three changes converged in the mid-1960s. New U.S. strategies for the Cold War made land bases on the Soviet rim less necessary than they had been. Second, Pakistan suffered its first disillusionment with the United States during the 1965 war with India (which I regard as the only unadulterated war between the two countries). Third, the ideological aspects, or pretences, of the Cold War also receded as the communist monolith broke into its Soviet and Chinese halves.

Because of these changes it ceased to be as essential for the United States as it had been before to count countries as allies only for the sake of the count as a political credit; or to count a country such as India as an enemy merely because it was not an ally. Against this the United States became cooler towards the disputes of this region and towards their play with Cold War politics. Thus, the United States offered no serious opposition when the

Soviet Union made its first serious attempt to resolve the Indo-Pakistan dispute at Tashkent. This benign indifference replaced the earlier U.S. hostility towards India and a thaw began in Indo-U.S. relations, first (even if passively), when Lal Bahadur Shastri became Prime Minister and later more actively during the early years of Indira Gandhi's first term.

Despite President Nixon's "tilt" against India in 1971, during the Bangladesh war and the offence caused in India by some indiscreet remarks by President Carter about India's nuclear programme, this phase of benign American indifference towards South Asia could have developed into a more positive policy towards India. Particularly so after the further impetus given to this possibility by the Janata Government in the late 1970s and by the relatively more relaxed Indo-Pakistani relations during this period. Further help came from the changes in India's domestic economic policies in the early 1980s and the U.S. reaction to them.

Active Arena

But in 1980-81 South Asia again became an active arena of the old Soviet-American animosities in the wake of the events in Afghanistan. The blizzard of the Cold War broke upon it again, thanks to the issues at stake, the style and temper of the Reagan Presidency, the differing perceptions of the Afghan problem in New Delhi and the opportunities discovered in this situation by the United States and Pakistan. By the United States to inflict a Vietnam upon the Soviet Union. By Pakistan to regain its former closeness to the United States and additionally to stake a claim for leadership of the Islamic world by carrying the flag of the faith first into Afghanistan and then into Soviet Central Asia, against communist infidels. As America resumed its active involvement in South Asia in the old context of the Cold War and Pakistan resumed its exploitation of the U.S. connection for the old as well as new purposes, India's relations with both countries deteriorated and relations with Pakistan came closer to the brink of war than at any time since 1971.

An Opportunity

Therefore, it can be seen that for four decades U.S. relations with India were either marked by active hostility or by benign indifference depending upon whether the United States had an active interest in South Asia or not. But now for the first time there is an opportunity that while the U.S. interest in South Asia may be close in spite of that and perhaps because of that, its relations with India may be good as well. There is a danger still that the opportunity may slip. But seeing the opportunity goes half way towards seizing it. The rationale of this opportunity is briefly reflected in the "National Security Strategy of the United States," a document which the Bush Administration presented to Congress in August this year. But it has also been spelt out at greater length by a senior representative of the Administration who is connected with South Asia.

The document makes a general observation which is pertinent to the changed perception about relations with India. "As the effects of the Cold War recede, regional disputes are less likely automatically to be perceived as part of a permanent—frequently dangerous, sometimes violent global competition, allowing broader international cooperation in their resolution." Elsewhere the document says, "Increasingly we may find ourselves in situations in which our interests are congruent with those of nations not tied to us by formal treaties."

In its main and direct reference to South Asia the document urges resolution of disputes through "negotiations rather than military pressure," and a rapprochement between India and Pakistan through "confidence-building measures and other concrete steps to moderate their military competition." This closely resembles the Indian view of regional and bilateral relations in South Asia.

A more detailed version of this new thinking has come from Mr. Richard N. Haas, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Near East and South Asian Affairs in the National Security Council. In an address to the Asia Society in January 1990, on "United States Policy towards South Asia," he said, "South Asia is not only important in itself, but has the potential to affect developments in other areas of great significance as well." America's interests there "are direct, not derived." It should not be seen only through "a global lens" but "in its own right." America should "remain engaged and avoid swings of neglect and embrace."

As for India, "We begin with a recognition of (its) position in the region." Its "substantial capabilities" should serve not only "our bilateral interests, but also those of all the people and countries of South Asia." He foresaw "a more developed set of consultations with India on matters of regional and indeed global security—consultations that are commensurate with India's growing role and that, in my opinion, are long overdue." (Incidentally, he also indicated, though indirectly, American willingness to live with nuclear India and Pakistan provided both countries took steps which could "add stability to a potentially destabilising situation," a possible reference to both countries signing NPT [Nonproliferation Treaty] while preserving the existing capabilities.

Expressions of Change

These are only early expressions of change and incomplete at that. They also contain ambiguous references which raise more questions than they answer. The National Security Council document, for example, talks about a need to "maintain stable regional military balances to deter those powers that might seek regional dominance." Unexceptionable at face value, such ideas are capable of distorted meanings. While speaking out strongly against terrorism, a fact India would welcome, the document also opposes "dangers of intermediate range missile deployments."

There are many such references and phrases which India would like to explore with care to see whether mutually

agreed and satisfactory readings can be arrived at including a reading of the "interests" which India's "substantial capabilities" should serve. But it is obvious that a possibility exists now in which an American "embrace" of South Asia need not alternate with "neglect," nor neglect alone ease India's relations with the United States. It is possible that an active American interest in South Asia may co-exist with India's own enlightened self-interest.

Shift in Indian Policy

92AS0150B *Calcutta THE SUNDAY STATESMAN*
in English 22 Sep 91 p 6

[Article by Sunanda K. Datta-Ray: "Why This Secrecy?"]

[Text] Like the proverbial bikini, the Prime Minister's statement on foreign policy in the Lok Sabha last week concealed more than it revealed. But if the mixture of traditional rhetoric, wishful thinking and pious platitude is read in conjunction with what Sharad Pawar had to say during the earlier debate on the Defence Ministry's demands for grants, two conclusions seem to emerge. First, there are glimmerings now of an appreciation of Jaswant Singh's view that "the defence budget is the price that we pay for our foreign policy." Secondly, P.V. Narasimha Rao, if no one else around him, seems to understand that a hankering for "visibility" can be counter-productive.

If acted on, this would mean a more realistic approach in which a serious effort is made to resolve differences (mainly with Pakistan and China) through diplomatic effort. It would also mean a lower profile in international affairs.

Over-Extension

Both seem eminently desirable in the light of economic difficulties that argue strongly against over-extension, either military or political. But such changes cannot, of course, be attempted in isolation from an overall review. They can only be aspects of an altogether new approach to the question of reconciling this country's economic and security needs to emerging global patterns without injury to a strongly developed sense of national pride. Any policy that ignores this last factor is bound sooner or later to be rejected by the Indian people.

Since the Government has lost no time in producing a new industrial policy, a new fiscal policy and a new trade policy, it is not surprising that it should now contemplate a new foreign policy. Indeed, in some respects action seems to have gone beyond the stage of contemplation. Indian endorsement of a West Asian peace conference that is not wholly acceptable to the Palestinians, for instance, or India's refusal to support Iraq's plea to the Security Council that economic sanctions should partially be lifted, may both be pointers to the shape of things to come.

There are other hints of momentous changes of which the country knows nothing. There have been indications of military initiatives that may or may not fit into an acceptable political framework, and certainly seem to be at odds

with some of the positions that New Delhi has consistently taken under successive governments. Reading between the lines of what is published, one suspects the Government is considering a major bilateral shift that might mean surrendering some of its earlier professions, domestic as well as international.

None of this has so far been admitted. On the contrary, through occasions like the recent meeting of non-aligned foreign ministers in Accra, the Government is making a determined effort to claim that it is business as usual. Perhaps there is a need for circumspection in a society that has been conditioned—at least at a certain level of political activism—to view the United States with deep suspicion, and to regard India not only as the world's natural leader but also as the ultimate repository of non-aligned virtue. But to persist with propagandist postures in public while reassessing priorities in private might again subject authority to the kind of embarrassment Chandra Shekhar's Government suffered when it became known that it was refuelling U.S. military aircraft.

The action was perfectly defensible in itself. It followed automatically from the position we had taken in the Security Council. It did not violate non-aligned or Islamic solidarity since so many members of both groups were active in the U.S.-led alliance. It was in consonance with global realpolitik and was expected to—and probably did—serve India's economic interests.

But, in spite of all these merits, secrecy made refuelling seem like a hole-in-the-corner affair. And the guilty confusion with which the SJP [Samajwadi Janata Party] Government reacted when the lid was blown did not suggest very much conviction, leave alone the courage of it. Prevarication seems to have continued even then. Apparently, the United States was not formally notified that the facility had been withdrawn even though solemn statements to this effect were made at home.

This kind of duplicity is not unknown in Indo-U.S. relations. It was a feature of Nehru's appeal to Kennedy in November 1962. It shrouded the Indo-American decision in 1965 to place nuclear-powered listening devices on the Nanda Devi and Nanda Kot mountains. And if Moynihan is to be believed, it tainted the transfer of U.S. (CIA?) funds to the Congress Party twice, to fight the Communists in West Bengal and Kerala. Future historians may unearth many more such instances of clandestine cooperation (if not covert operations) while Indian politicians were lustily thundering against U.S. imperialism.

Military Meets

The habit dies hard. There has been no official acknowledgement, for instance, of the important decisions regarding Taiwan and Israel earlier reported in these columns. Nor has Mr. Pawar or Mr. Narasimha Rao cared to explain to the Indian public why the military top brass of India and the United States should suddenly find it necessary to engage in a flurry of hush-hush exchange visits.

It is only an inference that the ice was broken in October 1986 when Caspar Weinberger became the first U.S. Defence Secretary to visit this country; that K.C. Pant took substantial advantage of that opening when he paid a return visit to the United States in July 1989 (again, the first Indian Defence Minister to do so); and that two conferences—one in Washington and one in Poona—have since paved the way for continuing discussions on strategy at the highest service level.

But discussions to what end? Indians have a right to know.

This breakthrough may not be of earth-shattering interest from the American point of view. India has always been peripheral to U.S. objectives, and the relationship has never been the subject of acrimonious domestic polities. Those few American politicians who table what looks like anti-Indian Bills and amendments are really only responding to trivial local compulsions.

Dan Burton of Indianapolis is a good example. His P.R. consultants advised him to soften his crusty reactionary image by taking up some human rights issue. Just then a very diligent Sikh lobbyist turned up with the most persuasive Khalistani propaganda. Since the Indian Embassy in Washington had never bothered to approach him, and made not the slightest effort to change his thinking, Congressman Burton went ahead to propose that aid should be suspended until India's human rights record had improved.

The U.S. attitude should, therefore, be judged not by what lone politicians may or may not do but by the Administration's actions. And in this respect, the signs are promising. The reiteration by John Kelly, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, of American acceptance of the Simla pact, and India's more recent exclusion from the purview of the Pressler amendment offer the welcome assurance that India and Pakistan are no longer equated.

Not Surrogate

But this can never be enough from India's point of view. If a new relationship is to be forged, if India is to modify long-held positions on the Indian Ocean, for instance, it cannot do so as a U.S. surrogate. India has all the attributes that entitle it to expect a more equal partnership. India is also one of the major custodians of certain collective economic interests (in the North-South debate, in the G-15's negotiations with the G-7) that it must continue to press. Any new understanding must, therefore, respect India's special position in South Asia and its established relationship with the Soviet Union, whatever the Union's final form, if it is to enjoy consensus support at home.

At the same time, there are certain disturbing signs that, in spite of detente and the collapse of Soviet power, some elements in the United States—General Colin Powell for instance—are still thinking in terms of security plans and strategic deployment. This is not an aspect of American policy in which India can afford to be involved.

Two further limitations on the scope of friendship. First, for all its military might, the United States may no longer have the economic strength to sustain superpower status. To that extent, India must also look to the European Community, Japan and the Asia-Pacific region for profitable connexions. Secondly, it is illogical to expect any kind of defence arrangement to survive without an identity of political and economic goals.

Mr. Narasimha Rao did not altogether ignore these balancing factors in his Lok Sabha intervention. He spoke of India's commitment to disarmament, the importance he attaches to democratic global politics in which decisions are based on justice and not power, and on efforts to release the Security Council from the stranglehold of what used to be the Big Five. But he gave no clue to the major rethinking that is obviously taking place in the upper echelons of his Government, and he made little attempt to explain military initiatives in terms of political perceptions. Most culpably, he gave no indication that this sea-change in India's foreign policy would be put to the test of public debate.

USSR To Honor Defense Pacts With India

92AS0095A Bombay *THE TIMES OF INDIA* in English
24 Sep 91 p 15

[Text] Moscow, 23 Sep (UNI)—The Soviet Union has made it clear that the Kremlin stands committed to honouring all bilateral agreements with India in defence cooperation.

The Soviet defence minister, Air Marshal Yevgeny Shaposhnikov, told reporters yesterday night that "all pre-coup agreements will be fulfilled by both the sides."

About his meeting on Thursday with the Indian ambassador, Mr. Alfred Gonsalves, Air Marshal Shaposhnikov said that the question of Indian defence minister's visit to Moscow in the first half of 1992 was also discussed.

Analyst Calls For Improved Relations With Israel

92AS0019A New Delhi *JANSATTA* in Hindi
18 Sep 91 p 6

[Article by Jawaharlal Kaul: It Is Not in Our Interest To Be Distant From Israel“]

[Text] Lieutenant General Jacob has opened debate on a topic that was taboo in India for years. Gen. Jacob has suggested that India should establish full diplomatic relations with Israel. Some other people have also made similar suggestions in the past. However, strong efforts were also made to shut such people up. Two decades ago, some intellectuals had established an Indo-Israel friendship group. The activities of this group were limited to holding meetings in which sometime they would invite an Israeli visitor. Unfortunately, an Israeli trade mission official spoke too strongly in support of his country. The Indian Government got worried about it and ordered the official not to leave Bombay without permission. Gen. Jacob has

shown his courage by raising an issue about which various Indian governments have been very sensitive.

However, at a time when the balance of power is degenerating very fast and political equations are also changing, someone has to take the courage to ask why is India watching these developments from the sidelines while being scared. Our policy of keeping all the eggs in one basket has ruined us. Now that we have lost almost everything, should we not try to start all over again? We always had friendly relations with the Arabs and should continue to do so. However, we took this friendship so seriously that we lost our right to choose our friends.

The first question is: Why should we establish full diplomatic relations with Israel? Israel is a very important nation in West Asia. Our relations with the other nations in this region are based on economic reasons. However, these relations vary from country to country. Iraq and Kuwait have been our major source of oil. We buy very little oil from Saudi Arabia. Actually, Saudi Arabia sells very little oil to us. We buy some oil from Iran also. Iraq, Iran, and Saudi Arabia, however, have been enemies to each other. Iran and Iraq have fought a very destructive war for eight years and Kuwait and Saudi Arabia have been the major opponents of Iraq in the recent Gulf war. Should we break up our friendship with Saudi Arabia and Iran because Iraq has been our special friend? If not, then why should we consider Israel our enemy just because it is enemy of some Arab nations? This criterion for enmity does not make sense. The United States and the Soviet Union had been enemies for a long time during the Cold War, and we were friendly with the Soviet Union. Did we break our relations with West Europe and the United States because of it?

Let us assume that dependence on oil controls us and we cannot take any action that might upset our oil suppliers. Still it does not make sense. Oil-producing nations sell us oil according to business ethics. No Arab nation has sold us oil at reduced rates because of our friendship. The truth is that our trade with these countries has hurt us. For example, Iraq imported several products from India and have never paid us on time. Iraq still owes us billions of rupees. Iraq had rejected India's request to provide it oil for the surplus exchange. These countries demand hard currency for oil from India, however, they do not follow this rule when making payments for the Indian products they import. Therefore, India has no reason to feel obligated to the oil exporting nations.

Our country was governed by such political parties that had erroneously thought that supporting the Arabs was very important for congenial religious atmosphere in India. Whether it is the Kashmir problem or any other Hindu-Muslim issue, the Indian government is always sensitive to the Arab criticism. This mentality had distorted our foreign policy so much that we had deliberately ignored Arab mischiefs and anti-India activities. Some Arab countries have supported Pakistan over the Kashmir issue. India has been declared and criticized as a sectarian nation in Arab and Muslim conference countries. These

countries even interfered in our internal affairs over several issues. However, the most important aspect of this problem is that some organizations in these nations have continuously supported our fundamentalist groups. If we consider our national interests, Saudi Arabia has never been our supporter. Not only does it have an informal military agreement with Pakistan, but also supplies billions of dollars worth of military aid to Pakistan. Even now, they are working on an arrangement to sell the captured modern Iraqi tanks to Pakistan. Isn't it a weak argument that cooperation with the Arabs protects our national interests and helps our national security?

Some people argue that there is a moral basis for keeping distant relations with Israel. It is said that Israel was created by confiscating Arab lands. This is said to be a nation established by Western imperialists by stealing the rights of Arabs. Therefore, it is not appropriate for a moral nation like India to establish any ties to Israel! This reasoning is ridiculous. First of all, the Indian Government has never used such moral reasoning to guide its policies. Even if we ignore other facts, we have to consider the recent example of our relations with Kuwait. The Indian Government knew well that Iraq had attacked Kuwait and from a moral point of view our stand was totally wrong. Still, the Indian Government supported Iraq and continued to support it until it was sure that Iraq was not going to win. Supporting the interests of an aggressor does not go with Indian moral values.

The second fact is that many new nations have been created during this century. Many nations have absorbed other nations into them. Let us take the Soviet Union. It forcibly annexed Baltic states to it. The Indian Government, partly because of the Marxist influence and partly because of the pressure of circumstances, never dared to criticize the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union is a distant land. Right in our neighborhood, China took over Tibet and hundreds of thousands of its citizens are living in our country as refugees. However, because of practical reasons the Congress government never endorsed the freedom slogans of the Dalai Lama. As for Israel, the situation in which it was established is not important. It was established the same way as Pakistan was, that is, against our wishes. Israel is there and it exists as a regular and progressive nation. It plays an important role in West Asian politics and we cannot ignore it. Diplomacy is just another name for practicality. Our closing eyes will not make it disappear.

Some people raise the question of the rights of the Palestinians. Of course, the Palestinians should get what is rightfully theirs. Establishing Israel does not mean that the Palestinians would have to remain homeless forever. We should participate at an international level to resolve this issue. We would call not recognizing Israel a smart move if this issue is resolved by this move alone. Our keeping away from Israel will not help this problem at all. The attitude of the Palestinians and the Israelis has not changed at all. What is the use of our being upset? The truth is that if we had good communication with Israel, we would have been

more helpful in resolving this issue. How can we say that the problem will disappear just by removing ourselves from the focal point of this problem.

In this changing situation, India should give up its "ostrich policy" and re-examine its relations with Israel. This is appropriate both from international and internal perspectives. Israel may be a small country, but because of its extraordinary determination and intellectual capability it has made remarkable progress in industrial area. It had to learn how to survive in difficult situations because of its climate and being surrounded by enemies. Israel is ahead of industrialized nations in agriculture and irrigation in desert, war technology, and many other scientific areas. Some of the techniques developed there could be very beneficial to us. Business and science collaboration with Israel can be helpful to us. More important than that is the fact that India is surrounded by unfriendly nations in the changing world politics. In the changed world equation, we can trust neither the Soviets nor the Arabs. It is important that we look for new friends for our safety. Israel can be our ally because Israel's and India's interests do not clash in South Asia.

Solanki Returns From U.S., Other Countries

92AS0156A Madras *THE HINDU* in English
7 Oct 91 p 1

[Text] New Delhi, 6 Oct (UNI, PTI)—The External Affairs Minister, Mr. Madhavsinh Solanki, today denied that the United States was mounting pressure on India to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty.

Talking to reporters on his return from a tour of the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom and Canada, Mr. Solanki said India continued to hold the view that the treaty was discriminatory and created a situation where there were nuclear "haves and have-nots."

According to him, there was no point in signing the treaty as long as there was no "symmetry and equality" among the signatories.

He said during their talks in New York, the U.S. Secretary of State, Mr. James Baker, had suggested that it would be in India's interest to sign the treaty, especially in view of the fact that China and France had also agreed to do so.

"But our decision not to sign the treaty has been taken independently, irrespective of what China does," Mr. Solanki said.

Mr. Solanki said India had all along spoken out strongly against nuclear weapons and always advocated their demolition. "We still hold on to that view," he said.

Kashmir Issue

The Minister said he had also discussed the Kashmir issue with Mr. Baker, with the latter wanting to know about the latest status on Indo-Pakistan relations.

Mr. Solanki said he had apprised Mr. Baker of Pakistan's continued support to "subversive elements in Kashmir and Punjab, despite repeated efforts by India to find a peaceful and bilateral solution to all issues between the two countries through negotiations. "Mr. Baker seemed to understand India's position on this quite well."

He said various bilateral matters, including the scope for increased trade between the two countries in the backdrop of the economic reforms initiated by the Government, figured in his talks with the U.S. Secretary of State.

Mr. Solanki said he got the impression that the United States wanted to be more helpful to India on not only the Kashmir issue but in other matters as well.

U.S. Official's Visit

A top U.S. official is due to visit India and other countries of the region, including Pakistan, this month-end for discussions on this subject.

Visit to Soviet Union

Mr. Solanki is expected to visit the Soviet Union next month, the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Muchkund Dubey, indicated here today.

Talking to journalists at the Delhi airport where he had come to receive Mr. Solanki, Mr. Dubey said dates were being firmed up.

ULFA Condolences on Soviet Engineer's Death

92AS0099A Bombay *THE TIMES OF INDIA* in English
26 Sep 91 p 13

[Text] Guwahati, 25 Sep (The Times of India News Service)—The outlawed ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam] today expressed "profound grief" at the death of the abducted Soviet engineer, Mr. Sergei Grischenko, in an encounter in early July as the engineer's wife arrived in upper Assam in search of her husband who she believes is still alive.

In a statement issued here, an ULFA spokesperson said that Mr. Grischenko and an ULFA activist were drowned in the surging waters of the Dihing river in upper Assam after a skirmish on a boat midstream. The statement said that after the security forces started an offensive against ULFA on 7 July, the organisation had decided to shift him to different locations and it was during one such shifting that the Soviet national died after an abortive attempt to escape.

ULFA "condoled" the death of Mr. Grischenko and said that it had informed the local police about the "unfortunate" incident promptly but the government began its search operations several days later.

The ULFA statement has come at a time when there is considerable speculation about the Soviet engineer still being alive. In fact, his wife, Ms. Nelli Grischenko, is determined to locate her husband.

PTI Adds:

Meanwhile, the army and the police apprehended 81 ULFA activists in the past 24 hours in the continuing "Operation Rhino" against the rebel outfit.

One person died of heart attack when the Assam Rifles recovered arms and ammunition during search operations at his residence in Barbhetia village of Goalpara district in lower Assam, an official spokesman said.

Meanwhile, the six ULFA hostages, including the three ONGC [Oil and Natural Gas Commission] officials, remained untraced. The ULFA deadline for exchange of the hostages in lieu of all its detainees ends at 7 pm on Friday next.

Regional Affairs

Border Security Head Reports on Bangladesh Talks

92AS0151A *New Delhi PATRIOT in English*
24 Sep 91 p 6

[Text] Calcutta, 23 Sep (PTI)—India and Bangladesh have agreed to formulate modalities to work out a time-bound programme to check the growing infiltration of Bangladeshis into Indian soil.

Director General, Border Security Force (BSF) T. Ananthachari, who led an Indian delegation for a meeting with his Bangladesh counterpart in Dhaka, on his return here told newsmen today that this was for the first time Bangladesh Government had recognised "certain degrees" of the problem and expressed its willingness to solve it.

Describing the meeting as a "positive direction" towards achieving "some results," Mr. Ananthachari said, "we did impress upon the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) officials by giving facts and figures of the infiltration issue."

Bangladesh Government also had shown its keen interest in it and assured full cooperation to tackle the problem, he said.

The BSF director general said that the meeting had a prolonged discussion on main four issues, including activities of Indian insurgents in Bangladesh soil, matters relating to border crimes and steps for the maintenance of border pillars between the two countries.

Replying to a question, Mr. Ananthachari said that 55,000 Bangladeshis were pushed back from border areas last year. If the proposed programmes were implemented properly by both the Government there might be some achievements in respect of solving the problem, he said.

The meeting also attached much importance to the issue of some insurgent groups of India like United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) and National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) operating from Bangladesh soil. The matter, for the first time, was taken up on the Government

level, which had agreed to help the Indian security agencies to tackle the issue, Ananthachari said.

Mr. Ananthachari said that the meeting agreed upon to exchange information between the two countries in BSF, and BDR levels on the movements of the insurgent elements and help each other solve the problems, "most seriously."

Referring to the border crime, he said that both the countries were aware of it and decided to strengthen the border posts and increase the number of the security personnels for manning the long stretch of open zone.

Stating that poverty was the main reason for driving Bangladeshis into the Indian soil, the BSF director general said, the meeting stressed the need for taking serious efforts by the Government of the bordering States concerned to help the security agencies in this regard.

The meeting discussed the measures to be taken for maintenance of the pillars in the border areas and suggested that the both BSF and BDR should be authorised by their respective governments to chalk out a programme in this regard, Mr. Ananthachari added.

Mr. Ananthachari said the BSF's responsibility was increasing and there was need to strengthen the organisation. The BSF was taking steps to prevent infiltration and had geared up its machinery to deal with the problem.

He said the rate of infiltration from Bangladesh was going up steadily and the BSF was seized with the problem. He said Bangladesh however claimed that there was no reason for their nationals to go to India as the situation here was no better.

He said the Bangladesh authorities had sought India's help in curbing smuggling which they claimed had been affecting their economy badly. While daily necessities like rice and sugar were smuggled into Bangladesh, luxury items like VCR and VCP entered this side of the international border.

The BSF director general said he was convinced that Bangladesh authorities showed a "spirited response" in dealing with the crucial matters and was hopeful that things would improve with the change in attitude in the Bangladesh side.

Visiting Sri Lankan Minister on Mediation

92AS0086A *Secunderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE*
in English 16 Sep 91 p 7

[Text] Madras, Sept 15 (PTI) The Sri Lankan Minister for Tourism and Rural Industrial Development and president of the Ceylon Workers' Congress (CWC), Mr S. Thondaman, on Sunday said he was awaiting the reply of the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] leader, V. Prabhakaran, to his proposals for a negotiated settlement to Sri Lanka's ethnic problem before undertaking any mediation between the LTTE, and the island government.

Addressing the Madras Press Club here, he said he had sent a message to Mr Prabhakaran, outlining the CWC proposals for a solution. He said he would mediate between the LTTE and the Sri Lankan Government if he received a reply to his feeler.

Mr Thondaman, who is in India on a private visit, said he had not offered to mediate but had sent a message to Mr Prabhakaran after the LTTE theoretician, Anton Balasingham, had reportedly stated that he (Mr Thondaman) could try and solve the problem if his approach was sincere and genuine.

He said he had made certain proposals as president of the CWC and not as a minister.

Asked if he felt that a solution to the ethnic problem was possible without structural changes to the Sri Lankan Constitution, Mr Thondaman said this could be looked into, based on the LTTE's response.

He said he had met the Indian Prime Minister, Mr P.V. Narasimha Rao at Delhi two days ago, and the External Affairs Minister, Mr Madhavasinh Solanki, on Saturday and exchanged views on the Sri Lankan situation, particularly the problems of repatriates in India under the Sirimavo-Sastri pact.

The Island Government's perception was that India had no role to play in its internal affairs, he said. Asked if he envisaged a new Indian role to solve the ethnic problem, he said. 'I don't think so. If that was so, would India have withdrawn the peace-keeping force?'

The Sri Lankan government would try to solve the problem internally just as India tried to control the situation in Punjab or Kashmir, Mr Thondaman said. The island Government was now pursuing only the military option, to discharge its responsibilities of maintaining law and order, he said.

Asked if Colombo should negotiate only with LTTE, he said it was the only organization which stood for a cause and was in the forefront of the fight for Tamils' rights.

To another question, he said the LTTE men could not be described as terrorists, as people would have chased them away if they had indulged in terrorism.

On the alleged LTTE involvement in former Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi assassination, he said there were indications of this, but no definite conclusion had been arrived at. An investigation team was looking into the matter, and ultimately the courts would have to decide, he said.

Asked if the Island Government would be justified in enforcing an economic blockade of Jaffna, he said the LTTE, which never went about its tasks in a slipshod manner, must have expected it. Asked if LTTE was on the run after Sri Lankan Army operations at the Elephant Pass camp, he said they have been on the run for the last eight years.

On his talks with Mr Narasimha Rao, Mr Thondaman said he had raised the plight of repatriates in India who were living like destitutes on the streets of Tamil Nadu. Mr Rao had been sympathetic and agreed to look into his suggestion for a survey on the progress of the repatriates' rehabilitation.

Mr Thondaman, who also called on the President, Mr R. Venkataraman, said he would meet the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Miss Jayalalitha, if possible, during his stay.

It would be inhuman on India's part to send back Lankan refugees after having encouraged them to come here in the last few years, he said adding he had always felt the Tamils should have stayed back in Sri Lanka and carried on the flight instead of seeking refuge in India.

He said dependents of Tamils of Indian origin in Sri Lanka, many of whom had sought Lankan citizenship, should be given the option of seeking Sri Lankan or Indian citizenship, and the two countries should settle this problem immediately.

On Miss Jayalalitha's demand that Katchatheevu be given back to India to protect Indian fishermen's interests, he said it was for the two governments to study it.

To another question, Mr Thondaman said the motion to impeach the Sri Lankan President, Mr R. Premadasa, was bound to fail flat as he enjoyed the support of more than 160 ruling party members.

Intelligence Agencies Suspicious of BCCI 92AS00894 Madras INDIAN EXPRESS in English 17 Sep 91 p 9

[Text] New Delhi, 16 Sep (Express News Service)—The Union Finance Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, admitted in the Rajya Sabha on Monday that Indian intelligence agencies were aware of "suspicions" that the Bank of Credit and Commerce International [BCCI] might have been involved in activities which posed a threat to the security of the country, but asserted that the government could not cancel its licence merely on such suspicions. Rejecting the demand for an inquiry by the Joint Parliamentary Committee [JPC], he, however, maintained that the government was committed to a thorough probe into the affairs of the BCCI in India.

Replying to the discussion on BCCI affairs, he said there were suspicions that the bank might have funded Pakistan's nuclear programme and was involved in laundering drug money, activities which concerned the security of the country. But, he claimed that there was no hard evidence.

Special Audit

Dr. Singh said the government would not cover up any of the activities of the Bombay branch of the bank, asserting that, "We are not in the business of the cover up operations." He said the Reserve Bank of India [RBI] had

already appointed a reputed chartered accountant firm for conducting a special audit of all the transactions of the bank in Bombay.

The Finance Minister said there was no "ulterior motive" in permitting the bank to open its branch in Bombay in 1983 and "too much should not be read into it." He said the bank was established according to set procedure and periodical inspection by the RBI had revealed that it was being run on sound financial lines.

Regarding the interests of the Indian depositors, he said the RBI was taking necessary steps to ensure their safety. As far as overseas Indian depositors were concerned, the government would make all efforts to see that "justice is done."

Dr. Singh refuted the charge that he was covering up the bank's operations just because his daughter had got a scholarship from a trust which received donations from BCCI, adding that he was prepared for any investigation into the matter and would abide by the judgment of the House.

"Who Was the Kingpin?"

Earlier, participating in the resumed discussion, Mr. M.S. Gurupadaswamy (Janata Dal) said the government should verify reports that some private account-holders in BCCI had made money from making top-level introductions for international business and purchase of technologies. "Who was the kingpin of such transactions," he asked.

He said government should probe reports that one Y.G. Padiyar connected with the bank was operating on telephone without any documentation and that monies earned were being deposited in the Luxumburg branch of the BCCI. He wanted to know why the passport of the said Padiyar had not been cancelled.

Some of the deposits with the bank, he alleged, were used for the purchase of 50,000 Indian rifles, which found their way to Afghan rebels and to terrorists in Punjab. Was it a fact that BCCI funded Pakistan's nuclear programme, he asked.

Mr. Gurupadaswamy said the BCCI scandal was "worse than Bofors" and demanded that the government order an inquiry by a Joint Parliamentary Committee into its affairs.

JPC 'Won't Help'

The Deputy Leader of the Congress-I, Mr. N.K.P. Salve wanted to know if RBI had been vigilant enough to take necessary steps to ensure that the interests of the Indian depositors were protected. He felt that a JPC would not be able to probe the affairs of the BCCI, as it required the expertise of professionals to go into it.

Mrs. Sushama Swaraj (BJP) [Bharatiya Janta Party] wondered why the government did not find it necessary to probe whether the BCCI had financed the activities of terrorist outfits in Punjab, Jammu & Kashmir and Assam.

Internal Affairs

President Sees No Substitute for Parliamentary System

92AS0065F Secunderabad *DECCAN CHRONICLE*
in English 24 Sep 91 pp 1, 9

[Text] New Delhi, Sept 23 (PTI). The President, Mr. R. Venkataraman, on Monday said that there was no better substitute for representative Parliamentary system as even countries which for decades operated a monolithic system are now adopting multi-party Parliamentary process.

Inaugurating the 37th Commonwealth Parliamentary conference in the Central Hall of Parliament, he said there was no other system which better protects the rights of the individual through the rule of law, and which enables, through the mechanism of debate and free discussion, the ventilation of the grievances of the people.

"Parliament today is not merely a law making body. It has become more and more a multi-functional institution performing a wide variety of roles," he told the delegates.

He said Parliamentary democracy with all its deficiencies was still superior to all other systems that human ingenuity has so far been able to devise.

The President told the conference, being hosted by India for the third time, that discipline and decorum are the basic foundations of Parliamentary democracy.

"To speak and let others speak, to hear and let others hear, to propose and to let the Opposition have its say and to argue vehemently but accommodate ultimately, is the pith and substance of Parliamentary process. Parliamentarians should enter the portals of legislatures to give, not take," he said.

Mr Venkataraman said political resilience and the recognition of the need and desire for adjustments to changing situations are the basis of democratic functioning.

He said that Parliamentary processes have been under critical review in some countries including those that have been members of the Commonwealth. Alternatives have been thought of, seriously suggested and sometimes actually experimented with.

The President expressed serious concern over the delay in giving the people of South Africa their basic political rights.

The President said that "while there are many positive developments in the world scene, there still are many matters of continuing serious concern. Despite encouraging developments in South Africa, much remains to be done for granting the basic rights to the people of that country."

"I believe that the source of most of our troubles is in the unholy desire of man to dominate over his fellow men, to deny those basic human rights to others which he wants for

himself", he said, inaugurating a six-day conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association [CPA].

The Prime Minister, Mr Narasimha Rao, the Vice-President Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma, the former Presidents, Mr N. Sanjiva Reddy, and Mr Zail Singh, the former Vice-President Mr B.D. Jatti and Mr Justice M. Hidayatullah, Ministers, and sitting and former MPs [members of Parliament] were among those present at the inaugural function.

About 400 delegates from over 40 countries were attending the conference, which would discuss subjects like reforms in South Africa, collective security and strengthening of security of small nations.

Welcoming the recent treaty between the US and the USSR to reduce strategic nuclear arsenals as a tangible contribution towards a nuclear-free world, Mr Venkataraman said that however there could be no denying the fact that there was still immense scope worldwide for a greater reduction of the expenditure on armaments.

He noted that the struggle for power and influence still dominated global affairs.

"Economic disparities and ecological degradation stare us in the face. We are assailed by a sense of foreboding that we are inhabiting a chaotic universe of competing social, economic and political forces and unless appropriate measures are adopted for this, the very preservation of the human species will be in jeopardy", he said.

The late Rajiv Gandhi, who had actively taken part in several meets connected with the Commonwealth, was remembered nostalgically by speakers at the inauguration.

Lok Sabha Speaker Shivraj Patil, who is the President of the conference, said the Tenth general elections held recently were both momentous and tragic. They were tragic because of the "brutal assassination" of Mr Rajiv Gandhi, and momentous because they asserted the primacy of Parliamentary democracy and the fact that even the "traumatic blow" did not prevent the electoral process from being completed.

Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao said India had its share of national tragedies, including the tragic assassination of Mr Gandhi, but the country had traversed this path with unwavering faith in democratic ideals.

CPA Vice President Darrell Rolle, who is the Minister of National Security and leader of the Parliament in the Bahamas, said Mr Gandhi had worked hard to make Commonwealth meets possible and endeared himself to the people of the world. He would "shine as a beacon of hope". Mr Rolle added. The Bahamas is to host the next CPA meeting.

Premier Reshuffles Top Officials Once Again
92AS0086G Bangalore *DECCAN HERALD* in English
3 Oct 91 p 1

[Text] New Delhi, Oct 2. Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao today reshuffled top Government secretaries for the second time in his three-month rule and appointed new officials in the sensitive departments of home, finance and economic affairs.

The top-level bureaucratic reshuffle put Urban Development Secretary Mr. M.D. Godbole in the key post of Home Secretary in the place of Mr R.K. Bhargava, who has taken the place of Mr Godbole.

Mr K.P. Geethakrishnan, who was Secretary (Expenditure) in the Finance Ministry was made Finance Secretary, with additional charge of Revenue. The present Revenue Secretary, Mr P.K. Lahiri has been posted to Manila as India's executive director at the Asian Development Bank, in the place of Mr D. Bandopadhyaya.

Mr K.V.R. Nair, who was Secretary in the Ministry of Food Processing has been made the Expenditure Secretary. Mr M.M.S. Srivastava, who is on leave, will not take over in place of Mr Nair.

Mr Montek Singh Ahluwalia, was shifted from the Commerce Ministry to the Department of Economic Affairs. The high-profile Mr Ahluwalia was earlier in the Prime Minister's office and responsible, among other things, for the much-criticized economic policy of Mr Rajiv Gandhi.

The appointments were cleared by the appointments committee of the Cabinet and will take effect from the date of taking over charge.

The reshuffle was on the cards for a longtime and came about following the retirement of Coal Secretary R.C. Jain last Monday.

Even though Prime Minister Rao and Finance Minister Manmohan Singh had opposed change of officials, sources speaking on conditions of anonymity say that numerous business lobbies and a section of the Congress(I) bigwigs have been pressuring them to move some of the officials.

There was considerable speculation in the capital the past few weeks that Defence Secretary N.N. Vohra and Finance Secretary S.P. Shukla, Petroleum Secretary Ashok Chandra would be moved soon. Finance Minister Manmohan Singh even went so far as to say on record that he would oppose any large-scale changes in his ministry, given the negotiations with the IMF was on.

Observers here say that unlike earlier governments, Prime Minister Rao did not resort to large-scale changes of officials when he became Prime Minister in June. There was considerable trepidation when the Congress Government came to power that officials would be tossed around like tennis balls. The Prime Minister also did not resort to the old practice of asking governors to resign and pave the way for changes.

Rao Performance as Prime Minister Praised
92AS0155A *Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English*
23 Sep 91 pp 1, 7

[Article by D.P. Kumar: "Rao Securing Future of Government"]

[Text] New Delhi, 22 Sep—When about three months ago the erudite and mild-mannered Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao assumed office as Prime Minister, he was conscious of the circumstantial constraints imposed on him. Except for the brief regime of Lal Bahadur Shastri, it was for the first time that someone from outside the Nehru-Gandhi family, and belonging to the Congress party, had become Prime Minister. What was more, he was heading a Government which was a minority one in Parliament and could be brought down the moment the two major political factions—the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] and the Janata Dal-Left Front combine—got together to vote it out. With an extraordinary political acumen that Mr. Rao was not then regarded as capable of, he launched out on the Prime Ministerial career, pledging to follow a policy of consensus, of seeking unanimity from Opposition parties and to go about his task, particularly because the nation faced many serious, intractable problems.

In the week that ended, marking not only the conclusion of an eventful Budget session of Parliament but the near-completion of 100 days of Mr. Rao's Prime Ministership, the ruling party can look back with satisfaction on his performance and the basis he has laid for a somewhat enduring relationship with the Opposition by virtue of his deft political management. The prospect that even the minority Government will last, if it is not rocked from within the party is also rather satisfactory. It does not seem that the ruling party will gain majority strength in the House from the 17 Lok Sabha by-elections to be held in November. The only other development that can elevate the Congress(I) to a majority position is a split in "the Janata Dal and the breakaway section joining hands with it. But that looks uncertain and it appears that Mr. Rao's sound policy of political management is the best bet for the ruling party, at least, for some time to come.

Soon after assuming office, Mr. Rao took the first major step, perhaps, one of the boldest, in launching a new economic and industrial policy, not only liberalizing the earlier one but rarely reversing it and chalking out a fresh path to boost the national economy that has not progressed enough.

The Prime Minister was then called upon to seek confidence vote of the House and to get a Congress(I) member elected the Speaker of the Lok Sabha. He achieved both the aims with political finesse, the latter with the cooperation of the BJP, conceding to that party the office of the Deputy Speaker. Of course, no Opposition party wanted to pull down the Rao regime just yet, but it must be said that the Opposition, too, wanted to deal with Mr. Rao's Government with cooperation and even sympathy, almost giving a chance to the party seeking to come out of the Nehru-Gandhi influence.

As the Parliament session commenced, there was doubt whether the new Government would be able to withstand the pressure, especially, in view of the controversial nature of the fiscal policies being launched and about which the Government had already served notice. Given the populist nature of contemporary Indian politics, there was fear that on some of the issues the entire Opposition might come together to put the Centre in a quandary. In the early days—as it happens with most parliamentary sessions—the Opposition was very active and was issuing all kinds of threats, particularly the Janata Dal and the Communist parties, warning the Government not to radically change the economic policies and introduce "anti-people" measures. Protests also raged against withdrawing the subsidy on fertilizers.

It had been known that in the inner conclaves of the Janata Dal, at least Mr. Ram Vilas Paswan and Mr. George Fernandes were keen on the party taking steps to bring about the fall of the Narasimha Rao Government, or at least to embarrass it. But credit must go to senior BJP leaders on one hand and the CPI-CPI(M) [Communist Party of India-Marxist] on the other, who did not hesitate in making their points, but refrained from pushing the Government to the wall. The Government managed the situation in which the Opposition did not press cut motions on Budget demands. Mr. Rao emerged as a very sober and thoughtful parliamentarian who raised the level of parliamentary deliberations and whenever he chose to speak, he left a lasting impression on the members of the House. At a personal level, he commanded respect from Opposition MPs, particularly the Opposition leaders, in spite of the fact that he was heading a minority Government.

The Centre did well in giving in to Opposition pressure to withdraw the budgetary grant to the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation and meet its demand on the one-rank-one-pension scheme for retired defence forces personnel. The Opposition also did not press any cut motions on Budget demands about which it had given notice. The fate of the Government would have been in jeopardy had a cut motion been pressed and had both—the BJP on one side and the Dal-Left Front combine on the other—voted together against the Government.

It may not be out of place to mention here that the credit for the rather smooth conduct of business of the House goes personally to the Prime Minister, and partly also to the leader of the Lok Sabha, Mr. Arjun Singh. The deft manner in which Mr. Singh guided the deliberations helped him in emerging as the principal lieutenant of the Prime Minister. It is not as if Mr. Rao's Government did not have difficult moments in the House. Some of the problems were not the creation of the Opposition. A totally unexpected source of distraction and tension was provided by the maverick performance of the Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister, Mr. Madhav Rao Scindia, who presumably in his efforts to project himself as a dynamic successor of Rajiv Gandhi and to adorn the mantle of secularism, had, in a speech in Lucknow, called BJP members "desh-drohins," a phrase which should have been used with more

caution, particularly in relation to a steadily rising political party, that had even dislodged the Dal or the Congress(I) in Uttar Pradesh. This annoyed BJP leaders and even the soft-spoken Mr. L.K. Advani and Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee found it difficult to control their rank and file. The party rendered transactions at the Lok Sabha nearly impossible for more than two days. Peace was restored by the efforts of the Prime Minister and Mr. Arjun Singh who assuaged the ruffled feelings of the BJP leaders on the issue.

The Narasimha Rao Government regards, as its major legislative achievement, the passage of the Bill on Places of Worship.

Rao's First 100 Days Called Successful

92AS00651 Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English
30 Sep 91 p 8

[Text] After hundred days of relative safety, when much of the criticism it faced was within the confines of Parliament or through the Press, the Narasimha Rao Government may have to face rougher weather in the form of open campaigns and agitations on the street. The National Front-Left rally in New Delhi last Friday, the first such protest action after the new government took office, and the decision of the alliance to launch a nation-wide struggle against the Government's economic policies and organize a Bharat bandh on November 29 are proof of that. The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] also has started a campaign on the issue of prices, after shelving the Ayodhya issue for the present. The two Opposition groups however have contradictory views on the Government's economic philosophy. The National Front-Left alliance is itself divided on many issues that face the country. They have therefore decided to avoid divisive issues and jointly agitate the economic ones on which there is a general consensus.

However, it is to the Government's credit that the Opposition has to go to the people on just one agitational plan, though most of the other problems that the country faced when it took office are still there. It has made good use of the presence of two opposing opposition groups, both willing to politically wound it, but afraid to make the fatal strike. But survival politics is not an end in itself, and the failure to deal with many important issues, like the situations in Punjab, Kashmir and Assam, will in the long run prove costly. The most important policy initiative of the Government has been in the area of economic reforms which are yet to show results. The Government can be proud of redeeming two of the Congress(I)'s electoral promises—the passage of the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Bill and the introduction in the Lok Sabha of the constitutional amendment bills on panchayat raj and urban local bodies. It has also come very close to a resolution of the issue of reservations for backward castes. To sum up Mr Narasimha Rao's hundred-day-old book has much on the credit side, a surprise for a Prime Minister so precariously placed in terms of parliamentary arithmetic, but he is yet to tackle many vital issues and prove his mettle in open political battles.

Commentary Criticizes Rao's First 100 Days

92AS0139C Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English
29 Sep 91 p 8

[Article by G. Krishnan in New Delhi: "A Blemished Record"]

[Text] He is the antithesis of everything those in power in recent years have been: mild-mannered, subdued, non-controversial and easily accessible with a middle-of-the-road approach, yet not scared of taking tough and unpleasant decisions. He is Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao, who heads the largest democracy in the world.

Mr. Narasimha Rao completes 100 days in office today while talk in the capital and elsewhere is still not just about the future of his Government but also about how long he will continue as Prime Minister.

The coming by-elections to 19 Lok Sabha seats, the Prime Minister himself has said, will determine the fate of the Congress(I) in Parliament: But speculation about whether Mrs. Sonia Gandhi will contest the elections from Amethi, which could mean the political eclipse of Mr. Narasimha Rao, continues in the capital. The wife of the slain Prime Minister has not yet made her intentions clear, though her ardent supporters, such as Rajya Sabha MP [member of Parliament] Ratnakar Pandey, are confident that she will plunge wholeheartedly into politics.

Some persons such as Janata Dal ideologue Surendra Mohan predict a crisis of the first magnitude if she enters politics. Others, such as the Communist Party of India's [CPI] Mr. M. Farooqi predict that it will give the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] a convenient stick to beat the Congress(I) with. Most observers feel that it could lead to top splits in the Congress(I) or defections from it. The BJP's Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee has even gone so far as to predict the imminent collapse of the Government, basing his forecast on the likelihood of Mrs. Gandhi contesting the elections.

Much of the doubt over the future of the Government is because the Prime Minister often gives the impression of not having full control over the party.

He lacks the flamboyance as well as the arbitrariness and stubbornness—qualities that help to get things done in the Congress(I)—that characterised the style of functioning of his predecessor, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, say many. But Mr. Narasimha Rao's supporters see this as his strength. His mild manner and willingness to consult everyone, they say, has helped him to isolate the coterie that once surrounded Mr. Gandhi. It has also enabled him to considerably defuse dissent in the party's State units and win the support of other parties for unpopular, but necessary, decisions, they add.

The Union Government's most controversial announcement so far has been its economic package, aimed at unshackling India's economy and throwing the doors open to foreign investment. The Government says that it will take at least three years for the results to show. The

Opposition says it is a sell-out to overseas financial institutions; a measure that has made India a beggar in the international community.

The immediate impact of this has been an unprecedented and unbridled rise in the prices of essential commodities, which the Congress(I) had solemnly promised in its election manifesto to roll back to the levels that prevailed in July 1990 in 100 days. By no stretch of imagination can the Government be said to have fulfilled this pledge.

Party spokesmen Chandul Chandrakar and C. P. Thakur were red-faced the other day when they had to admit that the party had not been able to keep its promise. All that the party had been able to do, they said, was to "arrest the price rise" of eight commodities. The prices of newsprint and edible oils had, however, risen sharply, they admitted.

This did not surprise anyone: soon after taking over as Finance Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh had said that manifestos were often written without an understanding of ground realities and that their purpose was mainly political.

The prices of grains, pulses, oils, sugar and vegetables have, on an average, gone up by between 30 percent and 100 percent in the last three months. The Congress(I) claims that they have risen not because of bad economic policies but because of the failure of the States to streamline the public distribution system. Mr. Chandrakar says that though the Centre has allocated thousands of tonnes of rice, wheat and kerosene to the States, they have not lifted stocks.

The Opposition says these are lame excuses. "The 100 days was not an invention of the Opposition but of the Congress. The Government by its misdeeds is inviting attention to the 100 days. It has failed to live up to any of its promises made in the manifesto," says veteran CPI leader Indrajit Gupta.

His party colleague, Mr. Farooqi agrees. The wholesale price index on June 22, he says, was 191.4. It rose to 209 by September 3. He fears that the Finance Minister may even be deliberately overplaying the financial crisis to create a scare. "Manmohan Singh is saying we are going down, down, down. Be prepared for hikes in prices, a hike in freight rates, air charges. There is no doubt that we are facing a crisis. But is it part of the political game that the Congress is playing? Who is responsible for this?" he asks.

The Janata Dal's Mr. Surendra Mohan says that the economic reforms of the Government have resulted in inflation touching a new high. It rose from 9 percent when Mr. Narasimha Rao took over to about 16 percent in September, he points out. "Juxtaposed against its promise to roll back prices, the record is bleak."

Lack of long-term policies to tackle the balance of payment crisis and continuation of the policies of the Gandhis have perpetrated the present crisis, he says. Unless the deficit is cut and the rupee revalued, the crisis will continue. "The policy of indiscriminate imports continues. In some cases,

it is repetitive. Not much thought has been given to essential and non-essential imports," he says.

"We talk about privatisation. But even here, industry does not have a good record. Take jute, cement and paper. What's their record?"

"They have brought the country to the brink of disaster," says CPI (Marxist) leader Harkishan Singh Surjeet of the Government. "They have mortgaged the economy and, thereby, our political independence. They are making India look like a beggar in the international world. It is humiliating."

But Congressmen such as Prof. Thakur say that there was no alternative for the Government, that it had to take bold economic decisions for the country to catch up with the rest of the world.

However, on the political front, even critics concede that Mr. Narasimha Rao has done better than expected. His middle-of-the-road approach to problems and low profile has won him the support of even his foes. This has enabled him to steer his Government clear of many a pitfall.

The Prime Minister's political adroitness was on show in the manner he played the BJP and the National Front against one another and secured the post of Speaker for the Congress(I) candidate. Again, just when the BJP thought it was getting close to the Congress(I), he managed to sideline it with the Places of Worship Bill, which the left parties and the National Front hailed as a bold step.

But the calculated risk of extending President's rule in Punjab barely 24 hours after becoming Prime Minister, made him instant enemies not only among the Opposition but also among the people of the trouble-torn State.

The Government is also seen to be dragging its feet in finding a solution to the problems in Jammu and Kashmir and Assam. "Unfortunately, no new initiatives have been taken on Punjab, Assam or Kashmir," says Mr. Surendra Mohan. "We complain of terrorist activities and Mr. Rao says he will initiate the political process. When it is started by them (the political parties), it is prohibited by force," he says.

The Opposition blames what it dubs the Government's "hide and seek" policies on Assam and Kashmir for the continued tension in those States and the demoralising effect this has had on the administration. But Mr. Narasimha Rao has been able to placate them by promising to hold elections by February 15, though it is likely that even this may be put off.

Yet, the Prime Minister's style of functioning seems to have won the hearts of even his detractors. His reluctance to meddle in the functioning of the bureaucracy, to split political parties or to topple non-Congress(I) State governments have shown him to be a mature politician, they agree.

Congressmen too point to differences between the styles of Mr. Narasimha Rao and Mr. Gandhi. For instance, he

respects partymen and allows them easy access, they point out. This was evident from the way dissidents from Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Orissa have been able to ventilate their grievances to the party President in recent weeks.

The Government's decision to introduce the Panchayat Raj Bill in Parliament despite its drawbacks, also won the Prime Minister's accolades.

Another political coup has been the quick acceptance of the reservation package introduced by the V. P. Singh Government. And by expanding it to include economic criteria, the Prime Minister has succeeded in taking the edge off much of the Opposition's criticism. Even though the Opposition says it is an eyewash, independent observers feel that it will cut into the vote-bank of the National Front.

A major failure of the Government, however, has been in international relations. Its failure to react swiftly to developments in the Soviet Union and the discordant notes struck by a minister and the Indian envoy in Moscow caused the country considerable embarrassment. Nearer home, the Government has failed to initiate any meaningful dialogue with Pakistan; in fact, there now seems to be more suspicion in the air.

There is also the need to take some definite policy initiatives in other regions, especially in view of the emergence of new power centres in the Pacific and Europe.

The coming days are widely expected to be even more crucial for the Prime Minister. If he fails to rein in prices, it will only exacerbate problems, both in his party and outside. Communal problems, in particular the vexatious Ayodhya dispute, could also take up a good deal of the precious little time the Government has. If the Mandal agitation spreads, the Government will also have a serious law and order problem on its hands.

Article Commends Rao's New Legislations
92AS0139A Secunderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE
in English 17 Sep 91 p 8

[Article by M. J. Akbar: "Taking a Stand on a State of Mind"]

[Text] Good news. The Indian state has finally taken a stand on two issues which in the last ten years have threatened to physically and emotionally rip this nation apart: secessionists and the dispute over the Mosque at Ayodhya built in the time of the facist Mughal emperor Babar. By the time you read this there should be two more statutes to the law of the land. One will effectively prohibit changing the status of any place of worship from what it was on the day modern India was born: 15th August 1947. The second, though legislated with the special context of Punjab, should be applicable in principle to every corner of India: no one with links to terrorists and secessionism will be allowed to contest elections in India. The virulent dispute over the Babri mosque, in fact, being sub judice,

that place of competitive worship is specifically excluded from the parameters of the law. But it will prevent India from becoming a rash of Babri mosques. One dispute over one mosque has crippled India, 3000 Babri Masjid wars will be probably beyond the capacity of even this patient and long-suffering nation to take.

And the law debarring secessionists from entering the legislature may not end the violence in Punjab, but it finally draws the line beyond which appeasement will not be allowed to travel. This is an extremely crucial decision.

The great sin of what might be called the secular establishment in the last four decades has been the continuous and continuing appeasement of minority communalism as the Quid pro quo of minority votes. Parties and theocrats who have openly challenged the Indian state have been pampered instead of being punished, given a place in Parliament instead of being shown the doors of a jail, foreign funds have been allowed to enter India with reckless impunity, and these funds have financed and sponsored thousands of centres where fifth columns are organising themselves to rise when opportunity beckons. All previous attempts to control minority communalism in any way have been sabotaged by the weakest and most pathetic arguments, including the very absurd line that minority communalism is somehow less dangerous than majority communalism. In concept and theory nothing could have been greater balderdash than this, even after ten years of deliberately anarchic killing in Punjab after years of murder and mayhem in Kashmir, after the provocations of a range of minority communalism from Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale to the Shahi Imam, Salahuddin Owaisi and Syed Shahabuddin, there are still people—and senior leaders at that—who actually continue to propagate this very dangerous self-delusion. This is the kind of suicidal liberalism, in fact, which Lal Krishna Advani welcomes very happily indeed, for it justifies his own party's excesses no end. The seeds of majority communalism may not be sown by the minority communalists, but they certainly irrigate them handsomely. The real problem today is that all political parties are ready and even eager to leave aside all their other differences and attack the Hindu-chauvinism of the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party], no one has a word of condemnation for Sikh or Muslim fundamentalism. There is great danger in the fact that it is only the BJP today which is perceived by the people as the sole voice against minority communalism, for then the BJP not only becomes the sole beneficiary of the reaction but also begins to sound credible when it charges others with pseudo-secularism.

In fact, such is the history of appeasement that even as I write this, there are still traces of apprehension in my mind as to whether the legislation against the secessionists will actually get through Parliament or not by the time you read this. We all know that there has to be a Bill on Punjab, and therefore this clause too has to be voted through, and yet...all kinds of red herrings will be placed in the way how do you define "links" with secessionist elements, for instance. I even heard the worst argument of all, and placed before me from a very surprising quarter indeed:

does not such legislation permanently exclude such elements from the Indian political system, therefore destroy the option of reform and consequently make today's terrorist into a permanent terrorist. For forty years we have kept the doors open. History is witness to the fact that if one person returned to the system through that door, then ten went away from India and into the arms of terrorists through that door also. Can India afford such an exchange rate any longer? That is what we have to decide, even if there are some weaknesses, let us say on the identification level, then the overall political strength of the idea more than compensates for this.

There is a tremendous battle ahead, and for no less a prize than the future of India. The secular non-Congress parties have now at last begun to realise that compromise with the BJP for electoral gains was a ruinous decision, that there has to be a consolidation of the secular parties against communal forces. But finding the right line to take is only one part of the battle who is going to form the infantry behind the generals? In the end, whoever has the people of India behind him will triumph in such an ideological battle. And the people will come only if they are convinced that you are living by a single standard, that you do not adopt a second standard for the Shahi Imams and Bhindranwales. The signs were apparent in the last general election that the secular forces had begun to lose the argument: not only did the BJP, single-handedly, win the number of seat it did, but it came second in more than a hundred constituencies. Privately, if not publicly, the CPI(M) [Communist Party of India-Marxist] too will admit that it was stunned by the number of votes that the BJP took in constituencies it lost, after fielding musclemen and actors as its candidates. But one wonders if even the CPI(M) which does do serious introspection (which is also why it succeeds in election after election), has been able to pinpoint why this phenomenon has been growing even in secular Bengal, it is the same syndrome: the perception of appeasement. If in the north of India this feeling is accentuated by the strut of Muslim fundamentalists parading under the protection of the establishment and the wails of the windows and orphans of Punjab and Kashmir, then in Bengal it is the Government's silence over the massive influx of illegal migrants from Bangladesh which is beginning to have its impact. The symptoms differ, the accusation remains the same. You cannot expect to lose the argument with people and hope to win the battle in Delhi. The second is only a consequence of the former. It is interesting that L. K. Advani, not a man given to excesses in speech, commented. After the Lok Sabha passed the Bill on Shriners that he was not happy about it—although "it strengthens our party politically," it is the last phrase which is significant, particularly in the context of the now widely-shared view that the real take-off point for the BJP's current momentum was the Shah Bano legislation. All the political parties who did the very right thing by passing the bill on shrines now have a further duty to prevent the BJP from converting this decision into an electoral bonanza, otherwise the whole move will become counter productive. The only way to do so is to challenge Muslim communalism, whose top leadership is sitting in

Parliament as well as in Delhi's Jama Masjid, with equal intensity. When that happens the BJP will be finished. And if that does not happen, the BJP will only add to its already all-too excessive strength. To repeat what one has said before: you cannot fight Hindu communalism by appeasing Muslim communalism, or Sikh secessionism. Continue doing that and the reaction will funnel power straight into the hands of L. K. Advani, who will accept it with a polite namashkar to all those who have "strengthened our party politically." Mr. Advani's confidence rests not so much on the merits of the bill, but on his assessment that the secular parties will not have the courage to end their trite vote bank politics. Banking on vote banks has become like banking with the BCCI [Bank of Credit and Commerce International]. For years the returns may be on a consistent rise, but one day it will all blow up in your face—revealing the essential corruption that produced such a comforting gloss.

The Government of Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao has started on the right track with these two bills, but it is only a start. Moreover, some of the signals emanating from the regions are hardly encouraging. Mr. Hiteswar Saikia's soft line towards the ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam] has entangled him in such a dangerous knot that it may yet end up throttling his government. What began as indulgence towards the extremists when the Janata Home Minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed's daughter was kidnapped has become an epidemic. Each surrender to the extremists can strengthen only one party. Each new order is a reaction to the mistakes of the previous one. So far, action and reaction has taken place within the secular ambit. The next reaction could well see the Indian masses experiment with the extreme as they have done in Uttar Pradesh, where the Muslim vote followed the Fatwa and the Hindu reaction was strong. The thought of the BJP in power in Delhi is worrisome not because Congressmen will be out of ministerial jobs for a while but because the BJP and RSS [Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh] will use power to invest the permanent institutions for governance, information and education with their culture and their ideologies. They will begin creating a Hindu Rashtra long before they actually announce its formal birth. We are already witness to their tendencies—in Uttar Pradesh, in their loutish behaviour in the Lok Sabha, in their attack on Madhav Rao Scindia's residence when they are mere claimants to Delhi's throne. It is not difficult to guess what will occur when they get into South Block and North Block.

The cost of today's mistakes will be ruinous. India cannot really afford any more errors.

Chief Ministers' Conference Held in New Delhi

Scheduled Castes, Tribes Discussed
92AS0149A Madras *THE HINDU* in English
5 Oct 91 p 1

[Text] New Delhi, 4 Oct—The Prime Minister, Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao, today set up a committee to go into the

increasing atrocities against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. This was one of the major issues discussed at the two-day conference of Chief Ministers which began here today. The special committee of the Chief Ministers of five States and the Governor of Punjab will examine the deficiencies in the system and suggest ways to tackle the problem effectively.

The meeting began with a heavy agenda but devoted its time only to this urgent and important problem. Tomorrow it will take up other items such as strengthening of the public distribution system and updating of land records.

The committee which met tonight will review the entire range of preventive and punitive measures and the legal and administrative steps being taken to check the growing incidence of violence against the socially segregated sections of society.

Report Today

The committee with the Chief Ministers of Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar and Haryana, the Governor of Punjab and the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, Mr. A.N. Verma, as members, will prepare a report on the basis of the inputs provided by the Law Ministry and other departments. The report will be presented at the meeting tomorrow for taking appropriate follow-up action.

Briefing mediapersons on the deliberations of the Chief Ministers' meeting, an official spokesman said that the committee had been asked among other things to examine the position regarding the responsibility of officers dealing with the cases of atrocities on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, to re-examine the legal and administrative provisions and also the actions to be taken against officers found wanting in taking prompt follow-up action on complaints of atrocities, to suggest a foolproof procedure in order to ensure prompt redress to the affected people.

In his speech at the meeting, Mr. Narasimha Rao dwelt at length on taking a more positive approach to solving this serious problem and not politicising it as it was being done now. Discussing the social and economic causes the Prime Minister said the problem had often been compounded by lack of sensitivity on the part of the police and the administration.

Mr. Rao said the States should formulate a strategy to prevent atrocities on these sections of population without further delay.

Stressing the need for proper implementation of the laws on prevention of atrocities, Mr. Rao said, "I know it is easier to pass a law than to implement it. Yet, in a matter like this, implementation is of the very essence." There was also a need for immediate action in States with a record of recurring incidence of atrocities, he said.

Special Courts

The recent spate of atrocities on the weaker sections of society only reminded the country of its failure to create an atmosphere of security for them and the nature of atrocities had also been a matter of grave concern to "me and to all of us of course," the Prime Minister said.

Regretting the increasing incidence of atrocities despite a plethora of Constitutional provisions and special enactments to protect the Scheduled Castes and Tribes, Mr. Rao said that it was a matter of great concern that exclusive special courts had been set up in only a few States for speedy dispensation of justice.

While calling upon the States to do something effectively to prevent the exploitation of these people, the Prime Minister said that there was no purpose in discussing this problem as if it was a new one. "What we need now is a firm decision to devise ways and means of implementing all the steps and legal and administrative provisions to provide security to them," he added.

Mr. Rao also sought the cooperation of all the political parties in solving this problem and said that for the majority of the population living in rural areas, access to legal machinery did not exist and the problem was compounded by a lack of sensitivity in all those who were supposed to provide protection to them.

He also made a reference to the approach of the political parties to the problem and said it had become a practice to blame either the Centre or the State when two different parties were in power. This attitude should change, he said.

The Union Home Minister, Mr. S.B. Chavan, expressed concern over the increasing incidence of atrocities even though there were several preventive measures. He hoped that the meeting would be able to evolve an effective strategy to eradicate the problem.

Welfare Measures

Several Chief Ministers, who spoke at the meeting narrated the steps taken by their Governments to tackle the problem and sought to highlight the fact that a number of measures adopted by them had resulted in the improvement in the economic condition of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes. Their speeches contained details of the legal and administrative steps taken by them to mitigate the ordeals of these people and strengthen the legal measures to protect them.

The Karnataka Chief Minister, Mr. S. Bangarappa, said the nature of such atrocities in his State were not "very serious and the number of such incidents is also insignificant."

The Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, Mr. Janardhan Reddy, said the statutes relating to the atrocities were properly implemented in his State. An extensive package of relief and rehabilitation measures had been codified and implemented effectively.

Tamil Nadu had taken all preventive steps to protect the rights of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes and it had been generally free from the serious problems afflicting the less fortunate sections of the population, said the Tamil Nadu Labour Minister, Mr. C. Aranganayagam. He read out the speech of the Chief Minister, Ms. Jayalalitha, who did not attend the conference.

Mr. Rao did not mention the Tsundur incident and ironically a delegation from Tsundur had met the Prime Minister and complained about the State Government's inaction in bringing the culprits to book.

Suggestions Noted

92AS0149B Madras *THE HINDU* in English
6 Oct 91 p 1

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] New Delhi, 5 Oct—A far-reaching suggestion accepted by the conference of Chief Ministers here is that distribution of surplus land under the Land Ceiling laws should be completed by 31 March of next year in view of the fact that land was one of the main causes of tension leading to atrocities on Harijans and adivasis.

As a large number of crimes against the SCs/STs [Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes] and arise from land disputes, it has been recommended that methods must be found to secure speedy disposal of land cases. Similarly, cases pertaining to land disputes pending in various courts should be followed up expeditiously.

The two-day conference of Chief Ministers which ended today was convened at the initiative of the Prime Minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, to consider on a priority basis means to tackle the rising incidence of atrocities on Scheduled Castes and Tribes and to revamp the public distribution system.

The conference also accepted the suggestion that Chief Ministers should keep themselves in direct touch with the question of atrocities on the most deprived sections of society and that they should do so 'in an intimate manner and on a continued basis in order to take effective and timely action.'

Important Recommendations

At the beginning of its deliberations yesterday, the conference had set up a subcommittee to suggest legal and administrative provisions to tackle the issue of atrocities on Harijans and adivasis. The committee, which consisted of Chief Ministers belonging to the leading national parties as well as the Punjab Governor, the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, the Union Home Secretary and the Secretary in the Ministry of Welfare, has made important practical recommendations.

For sensitive districts which have a history of large-scale atrocities on SC/STs (to be identified by state governments), it has been suggested that an existing post of

additional district magistrate may be designated to exclusively deal with matters pertaining to the SCs/STs. In suitable cases, even a full-time post of additional district magistrate may be created to oversee the schemes and programmes for the welfare of SCs/STs, and also to take action to protect the interests of the weaker sections of society.

Vigilance Committees

To ensure greater transparency in the investigation of cases and subsequent follow-up action, it has been suggested that a Vigilance and Monitoring Committee be set up in districts. The committee should be chaired by the district magistrate and have as members the SP [Superintendent of Police], the district welfare officer and other district officers concerned, as well as five members of the public. Of these the majority must belong to the Scheduled Castes and Tribes. The additional district magistrate, designated or appointed to deal with cases concerning SCs/STs, should be the member-secretary of this committee.

This committee would be charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the cases of atrocities against Harijans and adivasis were pursued vigorously and brought before the court.

Special investigation cells may be created at the circle/district level to ensure speedy investigation of cases of atrocities, especially in the sensitive districts, it has been suggested. The Government has been asked to pursue these cases in courts 'diligently' and to make every effort that these cases are heard in court on a day-to-day basis.

When an incident of atrocity against the Harijans and adivasis takes place, the local officers must be made responsible to visit the place of the crime at the earliest and start the legal process expeditiously. Senior officers like the Deputy Superintendent of Police have been asked to personally visit scenes of serious cases within 24 to 48 hours of occurrence of the crime.

Generally, however, it was felt that the responsibility of investigation of cases of atrocity should vest with the normal police machinery, and should be closely supervised by the Vigilance and Monitoring Committee.

A suggestion was that in suitable cases this Committee should have the authority to recommend proceedings against a public servant for wilful neglect of his duties as prescribed under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989. In such cases, especially, the investigation of the case may be entrusted to an investigation agency other than the district police, such as the Vigilance Bureau, the Anti-Corruption Branch, the State CID [Criminal Investigation Department]. A separate panel of prosecutors may also be appointed by the State Government to prosecute such cases.

It was also suggested by the conference that efforts be made to make appointments against unfilled quotas to the SC-ST posts by 31 March 1992. The Chief Ministers suggested that officers belonging to SCs/STs should receive adequate

attention in postings to important positions. Another suggestion was to enlarge outlays on housing for the SCs/STs and to improve their housing conditions.

Movement for New State Examined

92AS0020B New Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi
16 Sep 91 p 7

[Article by Krishna Singh: "Glimpses of Uttarkhand's Pain"]

[Text] [There are] sky-high peaks, snow-covered mountains, green forests, quiet and beautiful valleys, and the mischievous rivers that charm everyone while flowing naughtily through uneven and narrow valleys. [There are] temples here and there. This is not a poet's imagination and I am not drawing the picture of the heaven on earth either. This is the description of the mountainous portion of Uttar Pradesh known as Uttrakhand or Uttranchal. This Uttranchal is also known as god's country. M.K. Gandhi, the father of our nation, called this Uttranchal a mini-Switzerland while he was living in Almora.

This hilly region of Uttar Pradesh with its 52,121 square km area and 5.5. million population has been neglected by the state and central governments since the independence. This hilly area made up of eight districts may look like heaven from outside, but the residents live a life worse than life in hell. The problems of these residents are higher than the mountain peaks. The hilly area is still suffering from dire poverty. During the past 44 years, poverty here has increased instead of decreasing. The children here bypass youth and become old directly. Children of this hilly region are forced to leave home at the ages of 10 or 12 years because of poverty and unemployment. This age is for learning, but these children are forced to work as dishwashers and cooks in small hotels, tea shops, or homes in small and large cities.

The development plans that were started after the independence were limited to bureaucratic paperwork. Plans costing millions for developing this hilly region of Uttar Pradesh were approved just for window dressing. Some times they established a hill area development board and other times they established a hill development ministry. However, these million-rupee plans just moved from ministers to leaders, from leaders to bureaucrats, and from there to local boards and so forth. The living standard of some people has risen, but their number is negligible. A few places in this region have seen some progress. These include Nainital, Mussoorie, Almora, Ranikhet, Haldwani, and Dehradun. However, the situation in the areas where the hill people live is worse than ever.

The residents of this area mainly live on agriculture. We cannot call this hilly region of Uttar Pradesh progressive even in agriculture area. Most of the land under cultivation is stony, red, on slopes, and breaks when it rains. Some minor trades that depend on dirt and trees are also plied by the local people. However, no progress has been made in

these trades. The reasons for failure of small industries in this region are lack of local interest and information about important technology.

Industries related to leaves can be established, but our government has done nothing about it. Industries related to jungles are important for this region, however, the role of the local people in these industries is limited to carrying loads and towing. In the contractor system, the jungles are being cut recklessly because the government officials are in cahoots with the contractors. The problem of environmental protection is becoming worse by the day. The environment is not only threatened by cutting of trees but also by developmental programs. Mountainsides are being taken apart and all environmental rules are ignored.

The basic necessities of life such as electricity, running water, medical care, and communication are limited in this hilly region of Uttar Pradesh. The postal arrangement is so bad that it takes 15 days for a letter to reach its destination. During the Monsoon months, it takes one and one-half months. The worst problem is the lack of drinking water. The people have to walk 5 or 6 km to get water. Some plans were made to tackle this serious problem of drinking water, and were implemented in a few places, however, most of them ended up on papers only.

The educational situation is also fragmentary. Either there are not enough teachers or the schools lack educational materials. This deplorable educational situation is not limited to a few places, but spread in the whole hilly region.

The worst problem in this hilly region of Uttar Pradesh is the lack of health facilities. Government hospitals are few and far between in this region and these are in dilapidated condition. These government hospital always lack proper supply of medicine. The government doctors pay more attention to serving themselves instead of serving the people. There is no idea how many people die from common disease because of the lack of medical care. The people in this area still depend on semiskilled medical practitioners or try to get rid of sickness by seeing the "medicine men."

If the state, the central government, local leaders, and the bureaucracy really try, this hilly region can make remarkable progress. The electricity and water problems of this area can be solved by damming the small rivers. This can also help in developmental plans.

Industries related to fruits can also give new life to this region.

There are multitudes of herbs and roots of medicinal value in this region. However, no industry related to these exists here. Major drug companies buy these herbs at very low prices. There is now danger of extinction of these herbs.

Except at a few tourist places, the government has not made any plans to develop or expand tourism. The existing

tourist attractions are changing fast into jungles of concrete [buildings]. Building new tourist attractions can help improve the pitiful economic condition of the local people.

New industries can be established to use the local raw materials. This hilly region abounds in minerals such as lime, copper, gypsum, stone, and graphite.

Industries related to jungles can be an important source of income for the local people. However, the first step would be to stop the reckless cutting of jungles under the contractor system.

Commentary Laments Loss of National Direction
92AS00861 Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English
3 Oct 91 p 8

[Article by Ashok Mitra]

[Text] Way back in the late forties and the early fifties, our newspapers would carry reports on the state of law and order in neighboring Burma, where insurgency groups—Shans, Karens, 'Red Flag' and 'White Flag' Communists, etc.—were having a whale of a time.

A typical story would, for instance, narrate how a train steaming out of Rangoon on the Mandalay route would be halted at a distance of every 5 or 10 or 15 kilometers; an elderly woman, chaperoned by armed, earnest youngsters, would approach the driver and the guard of the train.

Realists

This or that rebel group, the woman would inform them, had sold to her the franchise of the rail track between that particular spot and the next level crossing; in case they wanted to proceed further, they would have to pay her a rental; the guard and the driver were realists, so too were the passengers; the rail staff would go round the compartments and raise the sum the woman had asked for, they would satisfy her and she would satisfy them; she, and the toughs accompanying her, would flag off the train.

The drama would, rest assured, be re-enacted, in almost identical manner, five or ten kilometers further north.

There would be other stories, such as on the state of corruption in Thailand or Indonesia: how the particular country's defense or police personnel were directly involved in smuggling, the naval chief of staff had his separate foreign exchange account in the nation's central bank, which he replenished from time to time by running arms, or gold, or cocaine, or some other contraband, and the civilian administration simply looked the other way.

Or there would be reports about a chief of police owning a chain of night clubs and massage parlors, his weekly takings exceeding the Government's total excise revenue.

Indians of that generation would read such stories and feel smugly superior. Similar things could never happen to us; did we not in India have an altogether different structure of values? The holocaust the partition had caused were

over, the country had an efficient, well-integrated administration; the kind of anarchy which Burma exemplified was unheard of here; minor corruptions were just that, the country's police and defence services were disciplined in the highest British tradition; the drawing room conversations could not be more condescending every time Burma or Indonesia was mentioned.

Once the Afro-Asian solidarity movement went into swing, we had to be somewhat more circumspect in our comments on conditions obtaining in these neighboring countries. There was, however, no question of discarding the stance of moral superiority: Burma and Thailand and Malaysia and the Philippines and Indonesia were not India; the nations made a habitual mess of their affairs; perhaps one day they could learn from our example the benefits that stem from a regimen of uprightness and discipline.

Forty years, and that smirk on our face has all but disappeared. The State of Punjab, Kashmir and Assam is hardly better than what Burma's was in the late forties or the early fifties. Should you happen to be in Chandigarh or Ludhiana, you can have a earful of fairly well-founded gossip.

For instance, a relative of someone you know has been kidnapped by the so-called militants while he was driving in a car in the outskirts of the city; your acquaintance drops in at the local police station; they provide him with an address; he calls at the address; a price is quoted, say, Rs[rupees]25 lakh all told, of which Rs 5 lakh is to be paid at the police station, in order that the person might be released. If, additionally, your acquaintance would also want the car back, it would be another Rs 5 lakh, of which one lakh goes to the police station.

The anarchy is, in other words, systematized, almost as systematized as the murders and kidnappings taking place in the industrial belt in the fringes of New Delhi itself.

Things are no different in Srinagar or Guwahati. The army contingents strut about, in the manner occupation forces do in any part of the world; the resident population, apparently unconcerned, carry on with their daily chores.

Irrelevant

As regards the young, often invisible, insurgents, it is really irrelevant whether they have received training in Pakistani or Bangladeshi or Chinese camps; they are, in any event, inveterate India-haters; it would be nothing short of grotesque to be told that fathers and grandfathers of many of the youngsters crowding the rebel groups in the Valley of Kashmir played important roles in Sheikh Abdullah's militia which stopped the attacking hordes from Pakistan at Nowshera or Poonch in 1947, or that the uncle of this self-styled brigadier with the United Liberation Front of Assam [ULFA] was, 30 years ago, president of the Golabari or Sibsagar Congress Committee.

These youngsters have no left-over sentiments for India. They are in total control of the goings-on in their respective areas; they can clamp a curfew whenever they like; they regulate the economic activities in the neighborhood, including the daily commerce, and collect fiefs, the army and the police maintain a certain distance; discretion, it is accepted as datum, is the better part of valor; the bravado is confined to casual limited skirmishes, more to satisfy the vanity of the high-ups in New Delhi.

Most of the North-east is one vast stretch of no man's land. A handful of politicians, heavily subsidized by the Center and shored up by armed personnel operating under the twin umbrellas of the Terrorist and Disruptive Practices (Prevention) Act and the Armed Services (Special Powers) Act, make a pretence of running a regular administration.

A Target

Such politicians sometimes even display the emblem of a 'national' party, but, once a visitor stirs out of the State headquarters by as little as a couple of kilometers, no writ he discovers, really runs, he could be at any moment the target of a sniper bullet from the rifle of a member of a Naga insurgency group of a Meitei volunteer corps or an ULFA guerrilla contingent or a Mizo liberation army, one guess is as good as another.

In Parliament, our politicians go along with the illusion. They talk solemnly on the imperative need to strengthen national integrity and fight unitedly the forces of destabilization. They have not a clue concerning the ground realities. They are of course right that foreign elements have stuck their surreptitious finger in the Punjab or Assam or Kashmir pie.

What else was, however, to be expected? Foreign powers maintain their secret agents not to while away time, but to take advantage of situations in countries toward which they have an animus or which, according to their belief, nurture animosity toward them. Enemy agents cannot be held responsible if our counter-intelligence apparatus fails on the job.

The ambience is thus of a march toward a predestined tragedy? The nation's press and politicians proceed one way, while the disturbed States go in a contrary direction. Now and then, the forces of law and order flex some extra muscles, shoot and arrest some more people, an army colonel or a director-general of police holds a press briefing to assure the nation that the back of the anti-national activities in the territory under their jurisdiction has been broken.

It is all routinized. After a fortnight has passed, the militants provide clinching evidence of their being as strongly entrenched as they ever were.

The drama stretches from year to year, money flows like water from the national exchequer, no discussion takes place in Parliament on the cost-effectiveness of the outlays. Either there is lack of time and the Home or the Defence Ministry's request for appropriations is favored

by the lucky guillotine, thus saving trouble for all, or the honorable members are advised that since sensitive issues concerning the nation's security are involved, they must be careful in their appraisal of events and, please, must not refer to items x, y and z.

The blind man's buff, therefore, goes on. The police and the army stick to their routine. With so much not-to-be-accounted-for resources floating around, the moral fibre begins to weaken: life is cheap, money is there for the picking, why not do some quick picking. It is not just the notion of national unity which has been turned into a matter of derisive contempt in the disturbed areas; the sense of right and wrong too has gone topsy-turvy.

The youngsters growing up in these territories watch the developments. Everyday, they feel a little bit further alienated from a system which, as they view it, has not only stifled their growth but is also corroding their moral frame. They, therefore, take to the Kalashnikovs in an even more determined manner, with the winding down of the war in Afghanistan, the acquisition of weaponry scarcely poses a problem.

None of this affects the quality of thinking in the nation's capital. The lobbies remain strongly entrenched. China is miles ahead of us in the nuclear race; Pakistan, everyone knows, has already manufactured a bomb; life is not worth living if our nuclear capability does not keep up with that of the neighboring Joneses. And we must not give any quarter to saboteurs and agents of foreign powers who are launched on the game of destabilizing this or that part of the country.

Funds Diverted

Whoever at this juncture talks about a reappraisal of national priorities is to be condemned out of hand. The more resources we spend in the way we have been spending to restore law and order in Punjab, Kashmir, Assam, etc., thereby diverting funds from deployment in essential tasks elsewhere, the greater is the risk of the number of intensely disturbed territories going up further; tomorrow it could be a couple of districts in Andhra Pradesh, the day after a long stretch in central or north Bihar, and so on.

Hardly anybody is impressed by speculations of this kind. The casual link between this style of conducting our internal affairs and our international credit rating dipping to the third place from bottom—just above Peru and El Salvador—is also missed. It is a grand cul-de-sac we have chosen for ourselves.

Andhra Pradesh: Dissension Endemic in Ruling Party

92AS0086B Secunderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE
in English 19 Sep 91 p 8

[Text] Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's unequivocal warning to the dissidence-hit congress(I) State Governments has touched off a rash of speculations on the possibility of leadership changes in Andhra Pradesh and

Karnataka. The two southern States, once considered to be the bastions of the Congress(I), have been, for the past several months, in the grip of feverish dissident activity. The endemic dissension in the ruling party reminds one of what happened in the two States before the 1983 Assembly elections. Perturbed at the goings-on in the Congress(I) in the two States, Mr Narasimha Rao, in his address to the party's Parliamentary Board the other day, observed that the Congress(I), voted to power after seven years, should justify the confidence that the people reposed in it. Take for instance Andhra Pradesh, where the Congress(I) Government headed by Dr M. Channa Reddy became a victim of convulsive dissidence within a few months of taking office. Dr Reddy's brief absence from the State capital triggered an ambition for the top post in some leaders. The way the Congress(I) legislators started washing their dirty linen in public brought the party into disrepute. And to the misfortune of Dr Reddy, communal riots erupted on an unprecedented scale in the old city of Hyderabad. The sizeable number of legislators opposed to Dr Reddy promptly pronounced judgment that he was inefficient. Unsurprisingly, Dr Reddy was removed. And the leader who succeeded him, Mr N. Janardhan Reddy, is now facing a similar situation. He has already experienced two bouts of dissension. The second bout has just begun; it is mostly fuelled by what is dubbed as the granite scandal. Realizing in good time that something had gone wrong in the finalization of the order leasing granite-rich land to a company owned by his son and to three other firms, the Chief Minister announced in the Assembly last week the cancellation of G.O. [government order]

What should not be lost sight of is that the order was withdrawn before the alleged nepotism had caused any loss to the State exchequer. This bold action of the Chief Minister was much appreciated by leaders of all the Opposition parties. The Telugu Desam Party, understandably itching to return to power, demanded the resignation of the Chief Minister. But the demand paled into insignificance before the Congress(I) dissidents' campaign against the Chief Minister. They made such a din that the Central leaders in New Delhi heard it, loud and clear. The ebullient crusaders for political morality surfaced with a bang to demand the Chief Minister's instant resignation in the interest of the party. The battle between the dissidents and the loyalists is still on. It manifested itself full-bloodedly at the Congress(I) Legislature party meeting on Tuesday.

Keeping his cool, Mr Janardhan Reddy told the fiery dissidents at the meeting that he would resign if the CLP [Congress(I) Legislature Party] wanted him to do so. No leader can do his best if he is not backed by the party. It would be questionable—indeed counterproductive—to disturb a leader who enjoys majority support in the party. Over the years, the frequent change of State leaders because of deep-seated dissidence has tended to legitimize, even institutionalize, the malady. This is one of the stark realities which had better be borne in mind by those Central leaders who are prone to lend their ears to whispering campaigns. The CLP must have a decisive say in whatever change that the Central leadership is contemplating. For the repeated and somewhat frivolous changes

that the party made in the State leadership at the turn of the eighties, it had to pay a heavy price at the 1983 Assembly elections. Let it not happen again.

United Liberation Front of Assam Overview

Mass Movement's Progress Traced

92WR0037X Secunderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE
in English 18 Sep 91 p 8

[Article by B. K. Sudhakar Reddy: "Terror in the Tea Cup"]

[Text] Assam today has become a nightmare that keeps getting worse. From USA (United States of Assam) to ULFA (United Liberation Front of Assam), the militant wing wedded to 'Swadhin Asom' has contributed much to this sordid drama of death and gore. The peddlars of death, extortion and gore are led by 'chairman' Aurobinda Rajkhowa and 'commander-in-chief' Paresh Baruah. Their stated goal is to liberate Assam from Indian colonialism. The modus operandi is kidnapping, extortion and killing. Their partners in sin are the National Socialist Council of Nagaland, the PLA [People's Liberation Party] and the Kachin Independence Army of Burma. The ULFA's brothers-in-arm are the Assam Jatiya Yuba Chhatra Parishad (AJYCP), the Assam Jatiya Unnayan Parishad (AJUP) and the AASU (All Assam Students Union)—all strong political groups, totally committed to Assamese chauvinism, economic independence and aggression.

Centre—Periphery Issues

Like in Punjab, the major grievance trumpeted by the ULFA (pronounced as ALFA) is that the Centre has been treating Assam like a colony and the injustice done to the people of the State is propagated to be prodigious—the alienation of the people, especially the middle class youth from the mainstream politics is total. The support that ULFA derives from the middle class is due mainly to the prevalence of over a million educated unemployed in the State. Coupled with this reserve army of the unemployed, the under development of Assam in the economic sphere and the drain of precious economic resources in the form of tea, wood and oil provided fertile ground for the sprouting of various shades of militant organisations, aided and abetted by vested political interests from time to time.

The Assam agitation must be distinguished from the Jharkhand and Gorkhaland movements in which the sheer despair of oppression by a majority community is believed to justify rebellion. The difficulties in the relations between the Centre and the States can be legitimately viewed in terms of pressures generated by the ruling elements of the various states for increased flow of funds from the Centre to the States.

In the case of Assam, compounded by the rising tensions of the north-east as a whole (tensions developed with the various tribal groups seeking autonomy, and the indigenous Assamese speaking population seeking to free itself of

the Bengali economic and administrative stranglehold on Assam. The economic, educational and administrative life of the State was dominated by immigrant upwardly mobile Bengali community, and the economic future of the mass of the people belonging to the Assamese linguistic cultural nationality was being imperilled by the regular exodus of Bengali people mainly poor Muslim peasants and landless labourers from East Pakistan into Assam. The issue was not given the attention that it deserved until it exploded into a big violent crisis for the first time in 1962.

From the perspective of Centre periphery nexus, autonomy for the States assumed its most dangerous form whenever it was advanced in the name of mass democratic political participation of aggrieved segments of the people. Thus, in Punjab, in Jammu and Kashmir, in Assam and in several of the north-eastern States, pressure for a reordering of Centre-State relations did not arise during the period 1977-84 from political parties coalitions in control of State governments as such, rather it arose from political movements enjoying a degree of mass popularity which they were in a position to augment by carrying the banner of political protest and by raising demands of a basic nature which would have been stifled in the past by a powerful centre on the ground that states on India's periphery were specially sensitive and vulnerable to foreign penetration and infiltration.

The Punjab and Assam crises point to different dimensions of the question of Centre-State relations. In Punjab, the main difficulty arose from the Sikh view of the link between politics and religion on the one hand, and on the other, the reluctance of the Hindus to identify themselves primarily as Punjabis rather than as a part of the Hindu mainstream of India. The crisis engulfing Assam arose out of the indigenous Assamese population feeling outnumbered and marginalised in its own home ground. By 1973, the proportion of indigenous Assamese to the total population of the State had dropped by over 20 per cent to well below 50 per cent, spreading alarm among a population which only in 1967 had achieved a new stability with the formation of Meghalaya. The formation of Bangladesh, far from allaying the fears of the indigenous population, aroused anxiety afresh with each successive wave of Bangladeshi emigration into Assam. During the 60s and 70s when Assam's importance to the Indian economy rose with the sinking of oil wells, massive inflow of Bengalis from East Pakistan (Bangladesh) continued, variously estimated at one to two million. By 1973, the proportion of indigenous Assamese to the total population of the State dropped to less than 50 per cent.

The ruling party at the Centre and Assam was unconcerned about the impact of influx of Bengali Muslims for the understandable reason that they along with a section of the tribal population, tea garden workers as well as other non-Assamese people living in the Barak Valley of lower Assam in contrast to the Assamese inhabitants of the valley (in the upper reaches of Assam), could be relied upon to give electoral support to Congress. But the resulting social disruption posed a threat to the communally organised agrarian economy of the State because the

new immigrants who were accustomed to radically different methods of cultivation sought to establish themselves on the land that they cultivated as individuals.

The defeat of the Congress party in the State Legislative Assembly election in 1978 was followed by the emergence of a mass movement, led by the students, highlighting Assamese grievances. It focussed attention on one main demand arising out of a grievance going back to the 60s. Declaring that the East Pakistan Bangladeshi immigrants were 'foreign' nationals, the student movement demanded that they should be repatriated to their 'homeland' or sent to any other part of India. Mrs. Gandhi's return to power in 1980 did not signal a change in the approach towards the issue of foreign nationals. Elections were called for the Assam Assembly in February 1983, which ended in violence and chaos. The election boycott called by the Assam students was complete. A government of questionable legitimacy was installed in power in a political atmosphere which reeked of divisions between Assamese and 'tribals', Assamese and Bengalis, Hindus and Muslims, and Hindus and Christians. The coming to power of Rajiv Gandhi brought a whiff of hope. There was considerable improvement in the situation and the Assam accord was signed in an improved atmosphere as a prelude to a fresh State Legislative Assembly election (under it, the Centre undertook to ensure that all illegal immigrants who entered the state during the 1961-71 period (especially 1966-71) would be disenfranchised, though they might be allowed to stay in the State until 1995, and to expel those immigrants who had illegally entered Assam across the porous Bangladesh border after the cut-off date of March 25, 1971). In October 1985, the students movement gave birth to the Asom Gana Parishad, the first regional party in Assam's history.

When AGP [Asom Gana Parishad] assumed power, it raised high hopes among the people. The hopes and expectations were belied. The AGP's functioning was characterised by autocratic and dictatorial tendencies, a complete repudiation of the rule of law, blatant favouritism and a subversion of all the wings of administration to the political expediency, and, in the process virtually dismantled the bureaucratic machinery, encouraged corruption and pushed nepotism to unprecedented limits. With the expected cooperation not forthcoming from the Centre, the AGP failed miserably in the implementation of the Assam accord, especially with respect to the foreign nationals issue. The AGP government even failed to rehabilitate families of those killed during the Assam agitation which were well within the powers of the state government to implement. The setting was perfect for the ULFA to come to the fore. Frustrated beyond endurance, it was not merely the youth and the intelligentsia which found the objectives and methods of ULFA appealing, even the traditionally cautious middle class responded. The State has never been the same thereafter.

Bodoland Agitation

A major segment of the population in the north-east region are constituted by the 'Scheduled Tribes'. Scheduled

Tribes in Indian public policy discourse are groups that are entitled to affirmative action programmes for members of these tribes. The Bodos are an extremely important group of tribes of the plains of Assam. With the unceasing immigration of Assamese and others to the plains of Assam, the Bodos perceived a threat to their culture and living and hence put forth a proposal for a separate State. The demand for a separate State by the Bodos has to be seen in terms of the power that elected representatives gain at the State level that enables them to determine policy in areas that are under the constitutional jurisdiction of States. The significance of this can hardly be disputed keeping in mind the composition of the population of the State. Legislatures dominated by indigenous peoples facilitate the provision of extended and strengthened policies of protective discrimination in favour of scheduled tribes in government employment and the allocation of government contracts. Transfer of lands from tribal hands to non-tribal hands can be made extremely difficult and development funds may be obtained from outside to be invested within.

Bodos are an agricultural tribe and practice shifting cultivation. Pressure of population on the land where they practiced their traditional agriculture, partly because of massive immigration and partly because of inroads by Assamese Hindus, which had them deeply worried. So, with the assumption of power by the AGP, the perception of threat to the Bodo tribals was enhanced.

The apprehensions were not without basis. The Inner Line policy under successive ministries dominated by the Assamese caste-Hindus was repeatedly and massively breached. Not only Bengali Hindu refugees from East Pakistan but even landless immigrant Muslims were allowed to settle there. As for the Assamese caste-Hindus, they had no difficulty, with the state government machinery to back them in interpreting and modifying the definition of belts and blocks to their advantage. Further, since the tribals lacked all protection from the inroads of money economy led by petty traders and money lenders, a large number of them soon found themselves without a means of livelihood. Since the tribals had no individual private proprietary rights in land owing to the prevalence of shifting cultivation, their problems became that much more acute.

The demand for a separate Bodoland is not a new one. Brahma Choudhury had been the proponent of the plains tribal movement [council] in Assam [PTCA] for almost two decades before the ABSU [All-Bodo Students' Union] and the Bodo Peoples Action Committee (BPAC) came to the forefront. Brahma Choudhury first advocated a separate autonomous area for the plains tribals residing in the north bank way back in 1967. He wanted a separate territory to be named Udayachal. For close to 20 years, he had been the lone voice pleading for justice for the neglected people till more extremist elements among the Bodos forcibly took away the mantle of leadership from him. Accusing him of working for his own interests, the young firebrand students leaders saw to it that the PTCA was decimated by systematic coercion and in most cases—

by violence. The fratricidal war between the PTCA supporters and the ABSU members took a heavy toll on the organisation Brahma Choudhury had so assiduously built over the years. For the Bodo people too, the long drawn struggle that the PTCA had been waging had become a painful journey and it was little wonder that a majority of them switched loyalties to the seemingly more attractive and more result oriented leadership sought to be provided by the ABSU. Gradually the PTCA lost its relevance and the violence perpetuated by the ABSU made sure that the first organised tribal group no longer carried any weight with the people. During the last few months ABSU-BPAC activists and their armed wings had launched a slaughter campaign against the PTCA. The PTCA leader, Brahma Choudhury was shot dead on August 27, 1991.

Such has been the course of different mass public movements in Assam. The movements have progressed to a stage where a bullet begets a bullet. The continued violence and arson has not only sapped the spirit and energies of the people but has also affected the economy badly.

Economy Slipping

The upshot of this tenor of violence, kidnapping and extortion is the economic degeneration of the already backward and under-developed State. Traders, merchants, industrialists and people belonging to all cross-sections of life are put under the squeeze. Trade has come to a standstill. Capital, more than Rs.[rupees]2,000 crores has already gone out of the State. Most intermediate goods producing units have been closed and so have most of the other industries. Unemployment is growing alarmingly. Tea and oil are the mainstream of economic activity in Assam. The tea sector generates and is directly responsible for 1.5 million jobs and provides sustenance to at least six million people in Assam. It provides provident fund benefits and old age pension to all the registered workers. There are very few families in Upper Assam that have not benefited in some way from the tea sector. Yet, it is this sector that ULFA has targeted for attacks. In an unprecedented step, the Union Government with the help of RAW [Research and Analysis Wing], the Air Force, Army and Indian Airlines, on November 8, 1990 airlifted the managerial staff and the families from Upper Assam to Calcutta. The State government was kept in the dark about the operation. The executives were asked by the ULFA to surrender five percent of their net profit which runs into several crores. Instead of appeasing the ULFA, the companies evacuated their senior officials and suspended operation in the tea gardens. This decision left 40,000 labourers without jobs. Similarly in August last, the ONGC [Oil and Natural Gas Commission] personnel were stopped from approaching the Corporation's oil fields in Sibsagar district. The pumping operations were badly affected and production of crude oil dropped from 9,000 tonnes per day to about 1,800 tonnes. In Bongaigaon an indefinite blockade was imposed preventing oil flow to Indian Oil Corporation's 3.3 million tonnes refinery at Barauni, in north Bihar. As a result, the Indian Oil's Barauni refinery shut down on September 14 last year. The ONGC on its part lost at the rate of Rs. one crore a day.

In 1990, the tea industry earned more than Rs. 1,000 crore in exports. And Assam contributes 60 percent of the tea production in India. The crop this year is expected to be the best ever. The earnings from this industry can most certainly ease an otherwise tight foreign exchange crisis situation. Much depends on the initiatives that the Government takes to attend to the problems in Assam and bring order and peace to the people. 'Operation Rhino' can only be a step in that direction. More positive steps need to be taken to alleviate the fears of the people and measures have to be undertaken to meet the longstanding grievances of the people. Our contribution need not always be in terms of 'Operation Bajrang' and 'Operation Rhino'.

Secessionist Scourge Condemned

92WR0037Y Secunderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE
in English 18 Sep 91 p 8

[Editorial: "The Scourge of ULFA"]

[Text] The ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam]-engineered hostage crisis has become so serious as to warrant the redeployment of the Army in Assam. The troubled State has been declared a disturbed area. The ULFA, which enjoys popular support in some parts of Assam, is bent upon holding the State to ransom. It wants to prove that it can undo what the Government intends to do for the welfare of the State's people. This menace is of a piece with what is happening in the northern States of Jammu and Kashmir, and Punjab. There is enough circumstantial as well as direct evidence to prove that the ULFA is being backed by some foreign forces. Chief Minister Hiteswar Saikia did well to call a spade a spade before the Army deployment and point an accusing finger at China, Pakistan and Bangladesh. His charge was based on information gathered during interrogation of the ULFA detenus. This disclosure confirms the suspicion in the public mind that without generous help from outside forces the ULFA would not have become a formidable threat to the integrity of the State. There are mind-boggling similarities between the ULFA anarchists and the Pakistan-backed terrorists in Punjab and the Kashmir Valley. There is a common pattern to the diabolical methods adopted by the saboteurs in all the three Indian States. Abduction of important people has become a tool in the hands of the extremists to force the State Governments to yield to their demands. It is now clear that these misguided extremists are acting at the behest of the hostile foreign forces out to destabilise the country. There is reason to believe that those forces, some of whom have territorial disputes to settle with India, have not reconciled themselves to the emergence of the latter as a strong regional power. They are known to fuel separatist sentiment in the Indian border States.

How deeply Pakistan is involved in the Khalistan movement in Punjab and in the murderous separatism in the Kashmir Valley is there for all to see. Pakistani leaders make no bones about their involvement in the secessionist agitation in Kashmir. All of a sudden the ULFA has risen as a monstrous secessionist outfit. The separatist feeling,

hitherto confined to a negligible minority in Assam, has now been so fuelled by the hostile foreign forces as to encompass sizeable areas. The ULFA leaders want to dictate terms to the elected State Government. No government worth its salt will tolerate such a situation. The hostage crisis has shown what the ULFA is up to. The ULFA would settle for nothing less than a sovereign State. It is sedition. Hence the need to suppress it. There is not even a small common ground between the ULFA and the State Government. Just a day after Mr. Saikia had taken office, the ULFA struck devastatingly. That was their response to the people's verdict!

Several Opposition parties, both in Parliament and the State Assembly, have inveighed against the deployment of the Army. But they have not suggested a more effective alternative. They have nothing to offer beyond stereotyped criticism of the Government. Strangely, the rerudescence of terrorism in the two strife-torn northern States and the outbreak of ULFA anarchism coincided with the bout of political instability that the country witnessed before the formation of the Narasimha Rao Government. The scourge of ULFA must be put an end to. It was only after considering the question from all possible angles did the Centre call out the Army to assist the civil authorities in restoring a sense of security among the people. Absence of firmness when it is needed most might be construed as weakness by the anti-national elements. Army help is very much needed to flush them out of their hideouts.

Pawar Sure of Restoring Normalcy

92WR0037Z Secunderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE
in English 18 Sep 91 p 9

[Text] New Delhi, Sept. 17 (PTI)—The Defence Minister, Mr. Sharad Pawar, has expressed concern at the recent reports of training of insurgent elements across the border in the north-eastern region but was confident that the army would be able to bring ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam] militancy under control soon.

'Operation Rhino', as the army anti-militancy operation in Assam is codenamed, has "got going" because of the cooperation that the army is receiving from the local population, Mr. Pawar informed concerned members of the parliamentary consultative committee attached to the Defence Ministry on Monday night.

The Parliamentary committee took a comprehensive review of the security environment with the Minister informing the members that the situation on the border with Pakistan was stable. He told them that except for incidents in Poonch, Kupwara and Kargil sectors of Jammu and Kashmir, there was no tension along the Indo-Pak border.

The activities of the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil EElam] militants across the Tamil Nadu coast are also being progressively contained with the help of strong vigilance launched on high seas by the naval forces and strong pressure on the land by Tamil Nadu State forces, Mr. Pawar said.

The situation on the Sino-Indian border, the Minister said, continued to remain peaceful. Giving details of the recent skirmishes on the Indo-Pak border in Jammu and Kashmir, Mr. Pawar said Indian forces had successfully driven out infiltrators who had taken shelter in some houses in the Indian village of Kirni in the Poonch sector.

At the meeting high had been called to discuss various aspects of the recruitment to the armed forces, the members expressed concern over the drop in recruitment. [sentence as published] The Defence Minister however clarified that there was no significant shortfall.

ULFA Reportedly Has 'Mole' in New Delhi
92AS0101A Madras *THE HINDU* in English
27 Sep 91 p 1

[Text] While it has long been taken for granted that the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) has penetrated crucial levels of the State's administration, especially security administration, there are disturbing indications that ULFA's reach has spread even to Delhi, with the organisation having its "sources" even within the Central Government.

It is well known, for instance, that the crucial element of surprise was missing when "Operation Bajrang" was launched on 28 November last year because the ULFA leadership was fully posted of the impending crackdown. Till now, it was generally assumed that ULFA's friends in the State administration were informing it of all major developments and impending initiatives touching upon its activities.

Secret Circular in ULFA Camp

The discovery, therefore, at the ULFA's "general headquarters" at Lakhipathar of a copy of a "secret circular" of the Union Home Ministry addressed to the Assam Home Department, (outlining the measures to be taken against ULFA in the then impending imposition of President's rule and deployment of the armed forces to combat the ULFA's activities), caused little surprise here. It was among the many vital documents recovered by the armed forces when they secured the Lakhipathar camp. The letter had been received by the State Government about a week before Operation Bajrang was launched on the night of 27-28 November. But ULFA got advance "intelligence" of that letter and vacated the Lakhipathar camp at least 48 hours before the "highly secret" operation was launched. The discovery of a copy of that letter in the camp was a lively issue in much of the polemics that followed Operation Bajrang and in the election campaign.

Militant's Confession

There are even more disturbing indications now that ULFA's access to high places was not limited to the State capital (Dispur) but included Delhi as well. According to a top ULFA militant who was recently arrested by the Nagaland police at the Dimapur railway station, along with another fellow militant—the release of both of whom, along with two other ULFA militants arrested by the

Meghalaya police on the India-Bangladesh border on the night of 22-23 August, ULFA has been insisting upon, leading to a deadlock in the hostage crisis—ULFA leaders had received 'intelligence' about the impending crackdown "before 19 November 1990," through a source in the "Cabinet Secretariat, Government of India." This explosive bit of information is contained in the interrogation report of the ULFA militant (Ananta Gogoi) prepared by the Nagaland police.

The disclosure has to be read in the context of a crucial paragraph (Para 7) of the Governor's report to the President dated 26 November 1990, recommending the imposition of President's rule in Assam. It says: "The Political Affairs Committee of the Union Cabinet [CCPA] invited me and the Chief Minister to one of its meetings at the Prime Minister's house some time ago and the Committee impressed upon the Chief Minister to take stern action against terrorism." The reference clearly is not to the visit of the Governor to Delhi only a few days earlier on 13 November, (by when only the timing of the imposition of President's rule was to be decided) but to an earlier visit (1 August) when the Governor was accompanied by the then Chief Minister, Mr. Prafulla Kumar Mahanta, and during which visit both of them did attend a meeting of the CCPA. According to New Delhi datelined agency reports of the events of that day, prior to the CCPA meeting the Union Home Minister (then Mufti Mohammed Sayeed) held a meeting with the Governor and the Chief Minister which was also attended among others by the Cabinet Secretary and the Union Home Secretary, where "an action plan to contain the activities of ULFA was formulated." According to that report, the "action plan" envisaged "toning up of the administration by weeding out elements sympathetic to the ULFA activists."

It is now clear that all decisions that followed from that meeting, including presumably the specific directives to the State Government to "weed out elements in the administration sympathetic to ULFA," were fully known to ULFA, courtesy not merely the "elements sympathetic to ULFA in the State administration," but according to the captured ULFA militant, courtesy sources in the "Cabinet Secretariat, Government of India."

Manmohan Singh Elected to Rajya Sabha From Assam
92AS0096A Madras *THE HINDU* in English
24 Sep 91 p 9

[Text] Guwahati, 23 Sep—The Union Finance Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, has been elected to the Rajya Sabha from the Assam Legislative Assembly constituency.

His was the only nomination submitted today, the last day. Scrutiny of the papers is to take place tomorrow, after which the formal announcement of his election will be made.

Speaking to the reporters this evening after submitting his papers, Dr. Singh expressed his gratefulness to the people

of Assam, the Congress(I) Legislature Party and Mr. Hiteswar Saikia for enabling him to have the 'honour to represent the State in Parliament.' He noted that the 'low economic profile' of the State had substantially contributed to frustrations, forcing some people ('misguided youth') to express their emotions through 'undesirable outlets.'

There were moves among the Opposition parties to put up a joint candidate to oppose the Congress(I) nominee. However, there was lack of agreement among the sharply split Opposition which comprises at least five different streams—the AGP [Asom Gana Parishad], BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party], the Bodoland Legislature Party, a broad alliance of the CPI [Communist Party of India], NAGP [New Asom Gana Parishad], ASDC [Autonomous State Demand Committee] and SUCI [expansion not given], and the CPI(M) [Communist Party of India-Marxist] (which on occasion has joined with the broad alliance).

This is the first time that a representative from the State will be heading the Union Finance Ministry.

Punjab Problem Examined

Martial Law Sought

92AS0122A Secunderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE
in English 19 Sep 91 p 11

[Text] Bombay, 18 September—President of the All-India Hindu Shiv Sena Surinder Kumar Billa will hold talks with the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS), Shiv Sena, Arya Samaj and other Hindu organisations in Bombay for the next two days to discuss problems concerning Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir.

Mr. Billa told UNI in an interview that martial law should immediately be imposed in Punjab since the situation there was going out of control at a rapid pace.

In Punjab, the police reigned during the day while the extremists did so at night, he said adding that none bothered about the killing of innocent people, mostly Hindus, who were in minority.

Mr. Billa called for a ban on bhog ceremonies of the terrorists killed in encounters with the police and security forces as inflammatory speeches were made at such meetings. He also said that more and more gurudwaras were being built in honour of those killed in encounters.

Security Belt

He said that a security belt along the State's borders should be made to prevent infiltration of terrorists from across the border. He also suggested that identity cards be issued to those residing along the borders of Punjab.

Mr. Billa also called for arms—licences for traders and government employees of the minority community, for self-defence. He said undesirable elements should be weeded out from the police force and suggested that the

personal of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh be mixed to treat a separate zone.

He was also critical of the functioning of government offices and wanted a joint meeting between Hindu parties, the Akali Dal and representatives of the government to solve all problems facing Punjab.

1992 Elections Welcomed

92AS0122B Secunderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE
in English 20 Sep 91 p 6

[Text] At last the Centre has undertaken to hold elections in Punjab before 15 February 1992. And Parliament has approved extension of President's rule in the strife-torn State for another six months beyond 11 November 1991. What with the harum-scarum decisions taken by the caretaker Chandra Shekhar Government on the Punjab polls, the subsequent postponement of the elections and their cancellations a few days ago, the Centre's credibility in the State is very low. therefore, the only way for the government to retrieve its lost trustability is to hold elections as promised. As one Opposition member has put it aptly, President's rule has been extended several times with "sickening regularity." A feeling has gained ground in the recent past that the Centre, unable to curb the terrorist menace, is presuming upon the inarticulateness of the peace-loving people who constitute an overwhelming majority of the State's population. That impression needs to be dispelled. It could be done only by reviving popular rule as early as possible. If free and fair elections are held in the next few months, there is every possibility of the State electorate giving a verdict similar of that of 1985. Though the terrorists constitute a negligible minority, they have succeeded in spreading the fear of the AK-47 rifle among the masses. It is that fear that must be removed before the proposed elections. The countless misdeeds of the extremists, such as large-scale extortion, have alienated them from thoughtful sections of people. The simmering discontent among all right-thinking people is sure to manifest itself in the coming elections. Admittedly, there has been inordinate delay in holding elections. The successive governments at the Centre can easily be faulted on the score.

In the first place, the dismissal of the Barnala Government in 1987 was debatable. It then looked as though the Centre had fallen into the trap laid by the terrorists and their abettors abroad. These anti-national elements made no bones about their desire to scuttle the peace process that began in the State with the formation of the government headed by Mr. Surjeet Singh Barnala. When it came to implementing the provisions of the Rajiv-Longowal accord, some leaders in Punjab and Haryana behaved short-sightedly. They had lost their national perspective taking advantage of the situation, the terrorists, who had lain low for some time, stepped up their nefarious activities. If only the territorial adjustments, as envisaged in the accord, had been made, the separatists would not have been able to plunge the State again into turmoil. Now there is a welcome reiteration by the Centre of its commitment

to the accord, which still remains the only basis for an enduring solution to the Punjab tangle.

The Central decision put the Akali leaders under an obligation to extend their cooperation in making the coming elections a success. There is urgent need to reconsider the recent Sikh Panthic conclave's resolve to boycott elections until "State repression" is ended. As the alleged repression is a result of the murderous terrorism, does it not stand to reason that the Akali leaders should also condemn the killing of innocent people by the militants? The Akali leaders have criticised, with some justification, the Centre for giving short shrift to the democratic rights of the people of Punjab. Those rights are now being restored with fearless participation by all political parties in the elections. The Akali leaders, whatever their factious squabbles, would be doing a great disservice to their State by boycotting the elections.

Punjab Militants Ask Baltics To Recognize Khalistan

92AS0090A Calcutta *THE TELEGRAPH* in English
18 Sep 91 p 4

[Article by Monimoy Dasgupta: "Militants in Punjab Ask Baltics To Recognise 'Khalistan'"]

[Text] Amritsar, 17 Sep—A major militant outfit of Punjab, the Babbar Khalsa, is trying to get the Baltic republics which have declared independence to recognise "Khalistan."

Most of the militants in Punjab have welcomed the recent developments in the Soviet Union. The Khalistan Liberation Force (Buddhisinghwa), the Bhindranwale Tigers Force (Chhandra), Sikh Students Federation (Daljit), and Khalistan Commando Force (Panjwar) have termed the developments as "conducive" to the struggle for "Khalistan."

These organisations feel that the weakening of the Centre in the Soviet Union and the grant of more powers to the republics show that "even a superpower like the Soviet Union could not suppress the desire of small nations for independence." They hope that this will give a fillip to their own movement for independence.

The militants have issued appeals to the people expressing the need to "take advantage of the international situation and exploit it fully." They have called for a "mass movement by the Sikhs" and have warned that "otherwise our struggle will get more prolonged."

In their enthusiasm, however, the militants seem to have neither analysed the Soviet developments deeply nor realised the basic differences of the Soviet and Indian systems.

The new enthusiasm generated among the militants is probably much-needed by them as recruitment into their ranks has fallen drastically, showing an all-time low in the first half of this year. They are also said to be facing a scarcity of weapons as the smuggling of arms over the

Indo-Pakistani border along Punjab has declined considerably with the erection of barbed-wire fencing, flood-lighting of the border and round-the-clock vigil by the Border Security Force.

'Disturbed Area' Decree in Punjab Extended

92AS0094A Bombay *THE TIMES OF INDIA* in English
22 Sep 91 p 1

[Text] New Delhi, 21 Sep—Nine out of the 13 districts in Punjab have been declared as "disturbed area" for another six months till February 1992, official sources said today, reports PTI.

The districts are Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Ferozepur, Ropar, Bhatinda, Patiala, Ludhiana, Sangrur and Faridkot, reports PTI.

The order issued by authorities in the state, which is under President's rule, said, "these districts are in such a dangerous condition that the use of armed forces in aid of civil power is necessary."

Chandigarh: Twenty-four persons, including four members of a family and six militants were killed and three persons kidnapped in Punjab since last night.

A Nirankari, Ajmer Singh, was shot dead by militants in Kirti Kishore village in Sangrur district.

Tamil Nadu: Dravidian Parties Still Bickering

92AS0065C Secunderabad *DECCAN CHRONICLE* in English 18 Sep 91 p 10

[Article by R. Bhagwan Singh]

[Text] Madras, Sept. 17. The Ruling AIADMK [All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] and the Opposition DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] parties, on Sunday, produced mega shows of pomp and glitter while celebrating founder-leader C.N. Annadurai's birth anniversary in what clearly appears to be a new battle the Dravidian legacy which the late 'Anna' came to be identified with by his many followers.

The Chief Minister, Ms Jayalalitha, was the star-attraction at an AIADMK function organized at the Kalaivanar Arangam where she honored Mrs Rani Annadurai with a silk shawl and five lakh rupees. The gesture had its obvious political overtones apart from providing the AIADMK leaders' kindness towards an aged widow.

However, it was the DMK supremo, Mr M. Karunanidhi, who stole attention on the day, breaking his self-imposed exile of three months by presiding over an extravagant party pageantry in the posh panagal park area. He had been virtually lying low after the disastrous wipe-out his party suffered in the last general elections and must have felt rejuvenated enough to break out of the shell after the recent wins in the byelections for two Assembly seats in Madras City.

The DMK show was however marked by violent demonstration of over enthusiasm by the cadres while coming in procession to hear the familiar rhetoric of their Kalaignar in the process. Some State transport buses were damaged and a local Congressman's house was stoned—leading to Chief Minister Jayalalitha making a condemnatory statement in the Assembly on Monday.

While the DMK claimed that the procession was attacked by the members of the Hindu Munnani—an RSS [Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh] front—and that led to their own retaliation "in self defence", the official version is that the trouble was created by the processionists themselves deliberately to demonstrate that police was inactive.

Strangely, the tussle with the cops subsided in about 40 minutes as suddenly as it had begun, which gave credence to the police claim that the whole thing was stage-managed to please the Kalaignar. In the process, the DMK chief issued a stern warning to arch-rival Jayalalitha that his party would be forced to launch a 'massive' agitation if her regime persisted with atrocities on the DMK cadres.

The Government, he pointed out at the rally, was on a vindictive path to harass the Opposition. It had foisted false cases against an IAS [Indian Administrative Service] officer (former Home Secretary R. Nagarajan) and reviving from cold storage police complaints against senior DMK leaders. And then the Kalaignar went on to explain the reasons for his party's rout in the general elections.

Blaming the debacle totally on the sympathy wave arising out of the Rajiv assassination, the DMK chief said: "In fact the Congress-I would have been swept to power in Tamil Nadu if only that party had chosen to go it alone this time." It was not clear really whether he was trying to drive a wedge between the alliance partners AIADMK and Congress, or if he was merely seeking to pass on the total credit for the AIADMK victory to the Congress—which could irk Jayalalitha should she take the remark seriously.

Karunanidhi, the master craftsman, then drew support from recent political history and said he would plunge into active politics once again as soon as the recent AIADMK Government completed 100 days in office just as Kamara (did when the DMK won power in 1967).

Earlier in the day, Mr Karunanidhi released a book on the history of the Dravidian movement penned by his nephew and former Union Minister Murasoli Maran, where his speech tended to be more philosophical than political. The Kalaignar appreciated Maran for bringing out such a book at a time when the State had forgotten the sacrifices and achievements of the Dravidian movement.

What he meant however was that the electorate turned ungrateful by electing a Brahmin as Chief Minister and that too at the helm of affairs in a Dravidian party the AIADMK.

The DMK he said, was in no hurry to recapture power and so he would not indulge in any act that would topple the present Government. Instead, the party would further

strengthen its roots and the cadres must reach out to the people for this. "We will not demand the premature dismissal of the Government. Let them rule for any length of time, we only want the people to realize in good time what kind of rulers they have now got then they (people) will decide for themselves."

Commentary Questions Kashmir's Exclusion From Bill

91AS1574A New Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi 6 Sep 91 p 6

[Article by Agni Shekhar: "Why Is Kashmir Excluded From the Places of Worship Bill?"]

[Text] We should welcome the Places of Worship Bill if it is introduced by the present government to the Parliament, in order to improve good will among various religious groups and to establish peace. It is important to take any action that would reduce tension among various sects. We consider our duty done just by calling a specific group or party a sectarian.

The way the government has introduced this bill into the Parliament, the haste and secrecy used in its introduction, and the noise raised by legislators in support or opposition all indicate the seriousness of this bill. It is important to consider whether this bill will improve good will or merely pour more fuel on the fire of communalism.

The government has excluded Jammu and Kashmir from this bill because of constitutional, as well as some unknown, reasons. Because there is no legislative assembly in that state, the governor could approve the bill introduced in the parliament. The governor has all legislative authority and traditionally has used it. The impression is that India has nothing to do with Kashmir. Therefore, it does not have to interfere with the places of worship in that state.

The religious feelings of hundreds of thousands of Kashmiri Hindus are strongly related to the worship places in Kashmir. In the present situation, because of their almost extinct religious identity, such protection is needed even more. From the perspective of national unity, we cannot separate the cultural feelings of the majority of our nation.

We should ask the government whether this act will help normalize the explosive situation in Kashmir, or it just wants to keep the whole country in the dark with the suggestion that there is religious harmony in Kashmir. A while ago, some sharp Kashmiri leaders gave a formula to the former government. In it, they suggested that Kashmiris be rehabilitated the way they were in 1953. If this suggestion is implemented, then Kashmir would not only get out of the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, but also the Parliament could have limited control of the state. Therefore, the Parliament is very careful about the Kashmir issue. Keeping the state out of this bill could be the first step in this direction.

It appears that the government is trying to save face in the context of Kashmir. Its claims are meaningless and contradictory. Even today, dozens of pro-Pakistan terrorist groups are active there. The weapons confiscated in the last one and one-half years are enough for several companies to fight a battle. When we look at the number of national guard troops that were killed, the number of terrorists and innocent citizens sacrificed, the number of houses, government vehicles and buildings that were burned, the hundreds of thousands of Kashmiris forced to leave their homes and move elsewhere, we can see how dangerous the situation there has become. According to some sources, there are about 40,000 trained terrorists. The government, however, believes that last year, about 10,000 Kashmiri youths returned to the valley from Pakistan.

As for the protested places of worship in Kashmir, their number is not small. On the confluence of the Dugh Ganges and the Vitasta rivers in Sri Nagar, the famous Bahukhatkeshawar Bhairav Temple had been closed for 20 years. The local majority found some excuses to forcibly take over this temple. The Amarnath pilgrimage camping park at Surya Tirth Martad, on the way to Amarnath, has been contested for many years. Two groups had a bitter fight over this place. At one time, even the Amarnath route was to be closed just because of this fight.

The Gautamnath pilgrimage place and its 14 marla [about five acres] land in Anantnag known to be an important stop for Amarnath pilgrimage is also being contested after the unfounded claim filed by Mirvaiz Qazi Nisar and the destruction that followed it. The Muslim Okaf Trust has built two buildings known as Suleiman Complex on the Durgnath temple land (Dalgate, Sri Nagar) in Shankaracharya Hills. The Devnath Suraksha Simiti has filed a case against these buildings. The Mangaldevi temple of Kavpora (Handwara) was transformed to Aastan [Muslim worship place] in only a few years. Parades with floats were used to be held here in the whole village during the Janamashtmi festival until a few years ago.

The residence cave of the famous Kashmiri Shiva scholar and poet Abhinav Gupta at Biruva has been closed to Kashmiri Hindus for 11 years. According to a folklore, Acharaya Abinav Gupta died in this cave while reading a famous poem, Vayapak Charachar, along with his 1,200 disciples. There are statues of gods and goddesses in this cave. Similarly, Pradhumman Pith (at Hari [power] Parvat) now changed to Hara [green] Parvat, and other temples in its periphery including Hatakeswar Bhairav temple of Malkhai, Wazir garden of Rishipir temple in Sopor, Aniknag of Khiv, holy pond of Trihganv temple in Kupvara, Jinpora Ashram of Bumai (Sopor), Saptarishi pilgrimage (where an old sadhu was mercilessly murdered a few years ago) at Gofbal (Chhandwara), Kohankhan temple at Dalgate Sri Nagar, Harnag pilgrimage at Tajar, and Bumjuv temple at Muttan are all being contested now. If these holy places are included in the Worship Bill, all litigations will end automatically. The litigations over these worship places and the adjoining properties go back to before 1947.

In addition, 27 cremation places in the Valley have been illegally confiscated by the majority population. As for attacks on temples during the last two and one-half or three years, these were in a large number. Some persons have denied such attacks vehemently. Veteran journalist B.G. Varghese wrote (The INDIAN EXPRESS, 8 May and 19 May 1991) that the terrorists had actually attacked the CRP [expansion not given] groups staying in the temples. They had damaged the outer doors of Ksheer Bhawani (Tulmula) and Amareshwar Mahadev temple of Dashnami Akhara (Barshah Chowk) in this process. All this sounds logical!

The uprooted Kashmiri people wandering all over the country still have emotional ties to these worship places. Even when we accept the reasoning of Mr. Varghese, destruction of worship places for whatever reasons is still an insult to worship places. Had the defense forces damaged worship places of any other sect, then would they have said the same thing? Who knows at which BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader's order did this journalist visit these specific two or three temples where nothing had happened this time. Mr. Varghese should have visited Kashmir when there were riots over Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's hanging, entry of Israelis in Al Aqsa mosque, Ziaul Haq's death or publication of Salman Rushdie's book instead of visiting these temples now (Ganpatrai, Parushyar, Karan-nagar's Gita temple, Rameshwaram temple, and Lal Mandi's Bhairavnath).

Still, Kshirbhawani pilgrimage (Tulmula) was attacked by rockets on 4 April 1991 and again was shelled on 4 May 1991. The huge and magnificent main entrance of the temple was damaged. Two temples in Satthu Babarshah, Rameshwar Mahadev (next to the bridge), and Gaurishankar temple (at the Ghat) were burned. This happened during the winter of 1988. Later, the building with the inn and shops next to Somyar temple in Habbakadal were also burned. The displaced Kashmiris had staged a sit-in protesting these burnings.

Rioters damaged Shiv mandir (Fatehkadal) on 26 January 1989 at 1630 in the afternoon. They also tried to burn the adjoining inn. A bomb was exploded in Sri Amareshwar Mahadev temple in Dashnami Akhara (Badshah) on 19 May 1990. Bullet marks can still be seen in the stairs of this temple. Similarly, many worship places in Nehama (Chhandwara), Sumbal (Sonawari), Seer (Sopor), Nagbal (Anantnag), Chinigund (Anantnag), Lokpunya (Lokbhawan), Gosaingund Ashram (near Lokbhawan) and Mahadev temple were damaged. Those who do not believe this information should inspect these worship places with a leader of displaced Kashmiris. They should also investigate how many times was the Hanuman temple in Amirkadal attacked and the story about Karkutnag (Anantnag).

It is common knowledge how many temples, cowsheds, and inns were burned in Anantnag during the riots in 1986. We do not have to repeat that here. A large crowd had attacked Sadhuganga holy place to forcibly occupy it a few years ago. Bajranath Shah, the head priest, was killed by hanging by the terrorists on 27 April 1990.

Sawami Keshavnath of Vicharnath temple at Sri Nagar met the same fate. He was murdered in January 1991. Later, the priest of Majgaon temple in Manragya was also murdered. Walls around Sri Nagar's famous Sheetalnath temple were not allowed to be built for a long time without any reason. A sign declaring it "Islam's yard" was hung on the property right in front of the police station.

It appears that the government is trying to hide facts by excluding Kashmir from the worship place bill.

Order Issued on Backward Reservations

92AS0100A Madras *THE HINDU* in English
26 Sep 91 p 1

[Text] New Delhi, 25 Sep—The Narasimha Rao Government today formally issued an order giving effect to yesterday's Cabinet decision on the issue of reservations of jobs for the socially and educationally backward classes (SEBCs) and others not covered under any of the reservation schemes. This takes the overall quota of jobs in the reserved category to 59.5 percent in the case of the two top classes of government jobs and to 62.5 percent in the case of class 'C' and 'D' jobs where the handicapped also enjoy a three percent reservation. In addition ex-servicemen enjoy 10 to 20 percent reservations in specified jobs.

The office memorandum issued by the Department of Personnel and Training this afternoon amends the "Mandal" order of the V.P. Singh Government issued on 13 August 1990 which had led to widespread student protests and a spate of immolations. The amended order was today filed before the Supreme Court as an annexure to the three-page affidavit submitted by the Government to the Court spelling out its views on this question even as reports of renewed student unrest in several parts of northern India started coming in.

The major difference between the new Government Order and that issued by the V.P. Singh Government is that in the 27 percent reservations in civilian government jobs for the SEBCs as defined by the Mandal Commission, preference is to be given to the poorer sections among them. Only if poor candidates are not available for these reserved posts will they be thrown open to others in the category of SEBCs.

The other important amendment relates to the additional 10 percent reservations in government posts for the poor among the upper castes and the minorities and all groups not covered by the benefit of reservations in any of the existing schemes.

The new reservation policy emphasises the economic criteria but for the moment it is silent on how it will determine the economic status of the people seeking jobs under the reserved categories. The criteria for determining the poorer sections of the SEBCs or the other economically backward sections of society are to be issued separately, the Government has stated. The Government spokesman today said that this had not been done so far.

It is also clear that the posts filled by the SEBCs recruited in open competition on merit will not be adjusted in the 27 percent quota. In this the Congress Government's decision is in tune with the policy spelt out by the National Front Government headed by Mr. V.P. Singh.

The official spokesman today pointed out that the package on reservations with an in-built economic criteria was finalised after a round of discussions between the Prime Minister and leaders of different political parties. This was followed by an all-party meeting on 21 September where a broad consensus had emerged favouring reservations with an emphasis on economic backwardness. The effort had been to hammer out a policy which would deliver social justice in an atmosphere of social harmony.

The new deal in reservations is also in tune with the Congress(I) manifesto and the Government's policy as enunciated in the President's address to the joint session of Parliament after the new Government assumed office. The President, in his address, had clearly stated that the Government was committed to special measures in favour of the socially and educationally backward classes and that it would give preference to the poor in this section, while also ensuring benefits of reservation to the poor in the other groups.

Court Stay Continues

For the moment the matter is with the Supreme Court and any government order on the issue cannot be implemented till the Court gives its verdict or vacates the interlocutory order staying the V.P. Singh Government's decision of 13 August 1990.

The three operative parts of the Government's office memorandum issued today are:

"1. Within the 27 percent of the vacancies in civil posts and services under the Government of India reserved for SEBCs, preference shall be given to candidates belonging to the poorer sections of the SEBCs. In case sufficient number of such candidates are not available unfilled vacancies shall be filled by the other SEBC candidates."

"2. Ten percent of the vacancies in civil posts and services under the Government of India shall be reserved for other economically backward sections of the people who are not covered by any of the existing schemes of reservation."

"3. The criteria for determining the poorer sections of the SEBCs or the other economically backward sections of the people who are not covered by any of the existing schemes of reservations are being issued separately."

Education Sector Not Covered

In discussions at various levels the Congress(I) has considered the totality of the Mandal Commission recommendations on reservations, but the Government so far has not extended reservations to education and other sectors as reported in this paper yesterday.

The Union Cabinet last night dealt with the limited question of apprising the Supreme Court of its view on the order on reservations passed by the National Front Government last year.

However, even at senior levels Congressmen have been concerned with all aspects of Mandal recommendations on reservations, given the serious political dimensions of the issues involved. Indeed, members of the Congress(I) Working Committee are understood to have sought detailed discussion on reservations in different sectors, not being happy with the implied discussions so far.

Last year the Congress(I) used to criticise the NF [National Front] Government for being populist, and not really being interested in extending reservations to the field of education which alone could have prepared intended beneficiaries of job reservations for the benefits to be conferred on them under the Mandal scheme. Congress leaders, especially those belonging to the SEBCs, have begun to recall this now.

Cabinet sources suggested today that in order to implement its stand on the Mandal issue, the Government would have to engage in consultations with State Governments. This would also be the case if the Government decided to extend reservation to the field of education.

Job Reservations: Renewed Issue Probed

Economic Criterion Approved

92AS0120A Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English
25 Sep 91 p 1

[Article: "Cabinet Approves Economic Criterion for Job Reservation"]

[Text] New Delhi, Sept. 24 (PTI): The Union Cabinet tonight decided to attach economic criterion for reservation in Government jobs for backward classes and extended the facility to poor among forward castes as the Congress(I) Working Committee [CWC] asked the Government to adhere to the party's poll promise on the issue.

An official spokesman said that the package finalised by the Cabinet would leave a sizeable percentage for open competition and at the same time look after the interest of economically backward people.

SC [Supreme Court] Hearing on Oct 1

Although the Supreme Court had fixed October 1 as the date of hearing on a batch of writ petitions challenging an order passed by the V.P. Singh Government reserving 27 per cent seats for SEBCs [socially and economically backward classes], the Government might not wait till then and file its affidavit before that date.

The spokesman declined to give further details about the percentages of reservation for various categories and only said that the Government stand would be made known to the apex court.

However, he said that the reservation package for SEBCs and those from the poorer section of the forward classes would have an "economic criterion woven in".

The spokesman also declined to comment on a query if the Cabinet had decided to bring about any change in the 27 percent reservation for SEBCs as envisaged by the Mandal Commission report.

Quota for SCs, STs

It had been stated earlier that the Cabinet had decided to continue with the 22.5 percent job reservation for Scheduled Castes [SC] and Scheduled Tribes [ST].

Before the Cabinet met to consider the issue, the CWC held a meeting and cleared the package.

The CWC asked the Government not to deviate from the promise on job reservations the party had made in its election manifesto saying it was the "last word" of the party on the issue.

The Working Committee which deliberated on the issue at a meeting presided by the Prime Minister and party President, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, told the Government to proceed as per the promises given in the election manifesto on the issue.

Briefing reporters, party spokesmen Chandulal Chadrakar and Prof. C.P. Thakur said there was complete unanimity at the meeting.

Mr. Rao told the CWC that consensus was being sought in the national interest and through consultations to come to a final position.

He had been meeting leaders of various opposition parties individually and collectively and there was broad unanimity that reservation should be provided to Backward Classes, Mr. Rao informed the CWC.

The Working Committee said the Congress Party had always been in the forefront of the struggle for social justice and in the fight against social inequalities.

"The Congress stands for the emancipation of the socially and educationally backward classes from the very inception of the struggle," the Working Committee said, adding that the party was unequivocally committed to reservations as an important instrument of social justice.

By-elections

At the same time the CWC made it clear, there would be no change in the reservations given to the Scheduled Castes and Schedules Tribes. "The criteria in this regard will remain the same as what it is today", it said.

Prof. Thakur said Mr. Rao made a general reference to the forthcoming by-elections to Parliament and various State Assemblies. Mr. Rao said the party should start the preliminary work to assess the ground reality in this regard.

The Congress President also drew the attention of the CWC to the achievements of the party's government with regard to the promises made in the election manifesto.

Asked whether a reference was also made in regard to rolling back prices of certain commodities in the first 100 days, Prof. Thakur replied in the affirmative.

Organisational Polls

Mr. Rao said it was time the party reviewed the progress of organisational elections. In this regard, it was decided to convene a meeting of the AICC(I) [All India Congress Committee-I] observers for various states tentatively on September 28.

In his address, the Congress President also underlined the need to review the working of various frontal organisations and cells of the party saying there was need to restructure them and give them a new direction.

Accordingly, the party President was authorised to constitute a subcommittee to go into the issue and which will report back to him as early as possible, Prof. Thakur said.

The Working Committee also decided to organise a series of programmes to commemorate next year the 50th anniversary of the Quit India resolution of the party.

Union Minister of State for Mines Balram Singh Yadav promptly welcomed the decision of the Cabinet and said it would go a long way in providing social justice to the economically oppressed sections of the society.

CPM for Consensus

The CPM [Communist Party of India-Marxist] called for a national consensus on implementation of the 27 percent reservations for the other backward classes (OBC), with suitable economic criteria to ensure that the benefit reached the most needy among the backwards.

The party's politburo, in a statement, also stressed the need for 5 to 10 percent reservation for the poor among the upper castes in this package, on the lines of the assurance given by the then prime minister, Mr. V.P. Singh, in Parliament.

The party expressed confidence that a national consensus could be arrived at on the basis of the above formula to ensure social justice and also to prevent it from becoming a divisive issue affecting the unity of different sections of the people.

News Analysis

92AS0120B Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English
25 Sep 91 p 7

[Article by Jagpreet Luthra, DH News Service: "Government in a Fix Over Job Quotas"]

[Text] New Delhi, Sept. 24—The adjournment of the hearing in the Mandal case before the Supreme Court till October 1 has given the P.V. Narasimha Rao Government

a week more to make up its mind on the issue. By all available accounts, the Government is in a fix over the issue. The issue in question is whether the Congress(I) supports the job reservation formula based on the Mandal Commission's recommendations which was passed by the National Front Government through an executive order in August 1990.

A highlight of the commission's recommendations, accepted by the National Front Government is 27 percent job reservations for the backward castes which is besides the 22 percent reservations existing for the SC/STs [Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes]. The V.P. Singh Government's stand was questioned in the Supreme Court through various petitions which has kept its implementation pending over the last one year. Subsequently, the Supreme Court asked the new Government to state its stand on the issue and the hearing on the case has been twice adjourned since the Narasimha Rao Government took charge three months ago.

Today's adjournment must have come as quite a relief to the Government which is ambivalent about supporting the caste criterion for a further 27 percent reservations for the backward castes. Given the political overtones to the issue, both for and against, the Government is in a real predicament. The havoc wrought by anti-Mandal agitation in north India last year in the wake of the V.P. Singh Government's order and self-immolations by agitating students have obviously prompted the Government to tread cautiously.

Pro-Mandal Sentiments:

The Government also has to reckon with the pro-Mandal mass whose voice has been effectively heard through Janata Dal leaders. Party Vice-President Ram Vilas Paswan has repeatedly challenged the Government, "if it has the guts, to reduce even by an inch, the quota of reservations" promised by the National Front Government. The all-party meeting and the cabinet meeting held in the background of the hardline attitude taken by National Front partners, who boycotted the confabulations, predictably, failed to achieve, anything. The matter was back into square one as far as the Centre's stand on the issue was concerned.

The Government's wariness was evident from the fact that at the all-party meeting, Congress(I) leaders maintained a studied silence. According to sources, opinion within the party is divided. This was quite obvious from Union Social Welfare Minister Sitaram Kesari's hasty retreat from his statement to Mr. V.P. Singh that the Government would support the 27 percent reservation formula. After Mr. V.P. Singh went to the press about the reported assurance the Government had given on this through Mr. Kesari, the latter denied that he had said as much to the Janata Dal leader. However, he refused to say what the contents of his talks with Mr. Singh had been.

Janata Dal leaders later quoted Mr. Kesari as having said that he was personally in favour of the Mandal Commission's report. Mr. Kesari belongs to a strong pro-Mandal

lobby in the Congress(I) that includes many party seniors from the south. The anti-Mandal section in the party is equally strong with MPs [members of Parliament] like Mr. Ratnakar Pandey openly and vociferously favouring an economic criterion.

Another issue within the party is whether to include the proposed 5 percent reservations on an economic basis in the 27 percent on caste criterion or to add it to that.

Fresh Agitation Feared

92AS0120C Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English
28 Sep 91 p 8

[Article: "Unwarranted Stir"]

[Text] There are ominous signs of eruption of a fresh round of anti-reservation agitation in the North after the Central Government notified its policy on reservations for socially and economically backward sections on Wednesday. Students in Delhi and Allahabad have already taken to the streets and violence has led to closure of universities in the Capital. There have been reports of trouble from elsewhere too. It is proof of the continuing hold of last year's searing sentiments on the minds of students that a symbol of its most aberrant manifestation—Mr. Rajiv Goswamy, who was the first of many to attempt self-immolation—was elected President of the Delhi University Students' Union this year. Violence, risk to life and loss of public and private property are not the only negative aspects of anti-reservation agitations; they soon sink to primitive levels of expression and conduct, thus threatening to tear apart the fabric of civilised social co-existence. The sparks of the agitation should immediately be put out, before they grow into a conflagration, paralysing national life and damaging social harmony and peace. A virulent upper caste offensive on the issue can lead to a counter-agitation by the backward castes too, with unpredictable consequences for the Government and the precarious balance of party loyalties at the Centre and in the States.

Since the new reservation package has the general support of all political parties except the Janata Dal and the CPI [Communist Party of India], it is unlikely that the agitation will get any political support, as it did last year when the Congress(I) and the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] covertly stoked the fires and even financed it. Still, the temptation to fish in troubled waters should be resisted. Parties that do not favour the dilution of the Mandal Commission recommendations with economic criteria—the Janata Dal and the CPI—are entitled to their view and can go to the people on the issue. But they should see to it that their course of action does not damage the cause itself. The press also has a great responsibility, considering that a section of it played a clearly instigatory role during the agitation last year.

The legal position remains much the same as before. Last year's agitation was called off after the Supreme Court stayed the operation of the V.P. Singh Government's notification of August 13, 1990. The stay still stands and

the Supreme Court's verdict on the issues involved in the new Government's modified notification (though there is some confusion among lawyers whether this necessitates initiation of a fresh legal process) is still awaited. This also robs the agitation of any rationale.

BJP Approves

92AS0120D Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English
29 Sep 91 p 9

[Article: "Job Quotas Broadly in Right Direction: BJP"]

[Text] Thiruvananthapuram, Sept. 28 (PTI)—The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] today said the Government's reservation policy was broadly in the right direction, but charged the Janata Dal with exploiting the issue for its political strategy leading to revulsion among a large section of society.

BJP leaders L.K. Advani and Murli Manohar Joshi said the party would not oppose the policy as long as it broadly approximated to the BJP's stand, which had been spelt out in its 1989 election manifesto itself.

The leaders are here for the BJP's National Executive meeting. The office-bearers of the party met this morning under Dr. Joshi's presidentship to discuss the agenda for the two-day executive beginning here tomorrow.

Mr. Advani, who is the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, told newsmen here that the problem of unemployment was acute. The manner in which the Janata Dal had used the issue for political purposes had created this situation, he said.

"Events cannot be made to order," he said adding a section of society will react in its own way.

Mr. Advani said the BJP desired that the total reservation did not exceed 50 percent as ruled by the Supreme Court earlier. However, as the Supreme Court was going into the reservation issue afresh, the party would like a clear-cut direction in this matter by the court.

STIR FLAYED: [quick, harsh criticism] Later, on his arrival, BJP leader Atal Behari Vajpayee said there was no justification for the ongoing agitation against reservation since the policy now adopted by the Centre had incorporated in it different shades of opinion.

He said the policy envisaged that the benefit of reservation should go to the poorer sections in the Other Backward Classes and there was also provision for reservation for the economically weaker sections in all castes.

BJP President Murli Manohar Joshi appealed to students to shun violence over the reservation issue as it would only "further complicate" matters.

Dr. Joshi said people had the right to protest any government decision, but resorting to violence and actions like self-immolation was "unjustified."

When the matter was before the Supreme Court, such violence would only complicate the issue, he added.

DH News Service adds: The Central office-bearers meeting of the Bharatiya Janata Party has demanded a high-powered central probe into the activities of the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] in Tamil Nadu.

BJP spokesman Jana Krishnamurthy told newsmen here that there was incontrovertible proof of the LTTE stirring up separatist emotions among the Tamils and that a Central probe was imperative so that the required preventive action can be taken to nip in the bud secessionist activity.

Mr. Krishnamurthy alleged that LTTE cadres were extending arms training to naxalites in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu and that the outfit had direct links with the ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam] in Assam.

The BJP had warned the previous DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] Government in Tamil Nadu and the V.P. Singh Government at the Centre of the LTTE threat to the unity and integrity of the country. But both these governments had encouraged the LTTE enabling it to carry out the first phase of its operations successfully by murdering Mr. Rajiv Gandhi.

LTTE PROPAGANDA: Although LTTE activity seems subdued at present, Mr. Krishnamurthy alleged that the outfit was actually executing its second phase of operations. Its supporters and sympathisers were now holding meetings all over Tamil Nadu justifying Mr. Gandhi's murder and urging upon the people the need for a separate State.

The meeting of the BJP officebearers expressed concern that the LTTE was preparing to execute its third phase of operations—that of creating a situation in Tamil Nadu akin to that existing in Punjab and Assam. The activity of the LTTE is not just a law and order problem and the CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation] probe into Mr. Gandhi's assassination did not deal in depth with LTTE plots. Hence the need for a separate probe, Mr. Krishnamurthy contended.

NAXALS' THREAT: The officebearers meeting also discussed the naxalite menace in Andhra Pradesh now spreading into Tamil Nadu. Mr. Krishnamurthy said the naxalite menace had not been fully realised by the government or the people and the government action against the naxals had been practically nil.

The BJP meeting discussed a detailed report on the naxalite threat. Mr. Krishnamurthy gave out statistics to show that naxals gunned down 149 persons in 1990 of which 102 belonged to the weaker sections. Between January and August 1991, the naxals had killed 80 persons and government writ was practically non-existent in naxal-infested areas, he added.

The People's War Group had collected nearly Rs.[rupees]20 crore as extortion money during the one-year regime of Mr. Chenna Reddy. It had also warned that

no tricolour should be hoisted on government building last August, an order complied with in several districts of Andhra Pradesh out of fear, he noted.

The most shocking aspect was that during the last polls both the Congress(I) and the Telugu Desam were vying for the support of the naxalites who were now spreading their net into Tamil Nadu, particularly North Arcot district.

In Tamil Nadu, Mr. Krishnamurthy alleged that there was a deep-rooted conspiracy to eliminate leaders of the BJP and Hindu Munnani. He charged that a Muslim outfit called "Jihad", led by a former NSA [National Security Act] detenu Palani Baba, was behind the death threats, proclaimed by means of posters appearing in Coimbatore, Erode and other towns, to eight top BJP-Hindu Munnani leaders.

One local leader, Mr. Shivakumar, had already paid with his life, Mr. Krishnamurthy said charging the Tamil Nadu Government with callousness in handling the threats.

GAS GRID: He said the day's meeting also discussed developmental strategies for the southern states. The BJP wants a southern gas grid created making use of gas being flared at present from Bombay High. The party also supports a southern water grid linking the river Mahanadi in Orissa to the river Vaigai in Tamil Nadu.

The BJP also wants the long-stalled Sethusamudram Project, for deepening the Palk Straits, to be taken up and implemented at the earliest. This would make Tuticorin an international port and save merchant ships 200 nautical miles as well and help them to avoid making a forced stop at Colombo as at present.

BJP General Secretary O. Rajagopal launched a tirade against the Muslims when he described the discussions about the growth of Muslim communalism at the day's deliberations. Both Tamil Nadu and Kerala were affected by this, he said charging the Congress(I) in Kerala with "assisting, aiding and promoting" Muslim communalism. The Indian Union Muslim League commanded control over 50 percent of Kerala's revenue today having in its charge four key portfolios. The Congress(I) was being forced to toe Muslim initiatives, he noted pointing out that this had a bearing on the nation too.

Consensus Approach Commended

92AS0120E Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English
29 Sep 91 p 8

[Article by Nikhil Chakravarthy: "Government's Announcement on Reservation Quota; Consensus Approach Successful"]

[Text] Less as a spectre but more as the symbol of a national consensus, the Mandal report has at last figured this time. The protracted, if not painstaking, discussions within the Cabinet and the Congress Working Committee underlines the success of Mr. Narasimha Rao's consensus approach, when he has frankly declared to be part of his political conviction.

Perhaps the Prime Minister has had more headaches on this in dealing with the disparate elements within his own party than with the Opposition parties.

Helped

The all-party meeting called by him helped him to understand the need for somehow marrying last year's formulations on the question of reservation for the Other Backward Classes (OBCS) as laid down by the V.P. Singh Government with the Congress stand as enunciated in the party's election manifesto.

Even if the Janata Dal kept away from the formality of the all-party meeting it was clear that the Prime Minister kept his channels open with Mr. V.P. Singh via his Minister, Mr. Sitaram Kesri.

While one has to welcome Mr. Narasimha Rao's labours with a sense of relief and satisfaction, one cannot help looking back on the days of insane hysteria and bitter denunciation that followed the National Front Government's announcement of 27-percent reservation for the OBCS in the Central Government services and its public sector undertakings. It is now abundantly clear that the antipathy towards the V.P. Singh Government's 27-percent reservation decision assumed the proportion of a veritable political earthquake very largely because of the intransigent attitude taken by the Congress at the time.

In fact, the hysteria in which the Congress participated in substantial measure—up to the point of the NSUI's [National Students Union of India] unpublicised role in the immolation campaign that was spread among the youth—was a part, a very important part of its bid to topple the V.P. Singh Government by any and every means at the time. In other words, it had very little to do with the merits or the demerits of the reservation issue in question.

One can understand Rajiv Gandhi's unacquaintance with the background of the Mandal measure. This coupled with his intensely subjective allergy towards Mr. V.P. Singh as the then Prime Minister, could explain his relentless *jehad* against the measure culminating in his marathon harangue in the Lok Sabha which was more vitriolic than statesmanlike.

It needs also to be stated that within the precincts of the Congress leadership at that time, it was not an easy job to outright condemn this OBC reservation measure. For one thing, both Mr. Sitaram Kesri and Mr. Shiv Shankar had welcomed it. Secondly, the Chief Minister of the Congress-run State governments of Andhra and Karnataka were themselves committed to substantial reservation for OBCS and it became virtually impossible for them to repudiate the measure initiated by Mr. V.P. Singh.

In a sense, what Mr. V.P. Singh did last year was to implement what Indira Gandhi had left unfinished seven years before. It needs to be pointed out that the Mandal Commission was the only commission set up by the Janata

Party 1977-79 Government which she had not cancelled. Rather she gave it an extension until the report was ready.

Long Debate

After nearly a year of its submission, she let the Lok Sabha discuss it in one of its longest debates, steered by the then Union Home Minister, who is now the President of India. Nowhere in that debate was the Mandal report denounced, least of all by the Congress benches, and the impression was left to linger that Congress Government would favourably consider bringing forward the necessary legislation to implement the recommendations of the Mandal Commission.

When, therefore, Mr. V.P. Singh brought the measure before Parliament early in August last year, he was virtually carrying it forward where it had been left incomplete by Indira Gandhi. In fact, the parliamentary proceedings immediately following Mr. V.P. Singh's announcement made it clear that no party was in a position to outright condemn the proposal.

Disoriented

The chorus of condemnation from the political parties opposed to Mr. V.P. Singh followed, and not preceded, the hysteria unleashed by the students on rampage with the climax in a number of deaths, that have come to be known as cases of "self-immolation".

The Government at that time was so disoriented that it did not institute a thorough investigation into this extraordinary campaign.

There is little doubt, however, that had the Congress at that time taken a constructive stand on this issue of national concern, the situation would not have been vitiated at all. One got the impression that the Congress leadership at the time was standing on the sidelines watching it as a delectable political bull-fight that it hoped would bring about the downfall of the V.P. Singh Government.

Though badly battered, the National Front Government survived the ordeal of the anti-Mandal hysteria, which, it must be admitted, was fanned in a calculated manner by the media, painting Mr. V.P. Singh as the ultimate, unmitigated villain of Indian politics—as the embodiment of a monstrous ogre saturated in sadism. Nobody, really nobody in Indian politics in the last four decades since Independence, has been painted so black with such vicious malignity. Such was the ugly exhibition of the power of the media today.

The outcome of this bitter campaign was that Mr. V.P. Singh was made into a demi-god hero of the deprived sections of society. If one were to go by the measure of the sudden popularity that was invested in him personally among the underprivileged masses from Kerala to Bihar, one has to thank the anti-Mandal agitators for virtually

making a legend out of him, just as Rajiv Gandhi earlier had made him a national leader by hounding him out of the Congress.

With the decision of the Narasimha Rao Government to confirm the 27 percent reservation for OBCs, there is no question that Mr. V.P. Singh's much-maligned stand has been amply vindicated. No doubt the present Government's decision to extend reservation to the economically deprived section of the upper castes and preference for it among the backward castes also would be widely welcomed.

It would be taken by the public as a case of petty-fogging dissent if some of the Janata Dal leaders demur on this insertion of the economic criterion. No doubt, the rigours of upper-caste domination are by themselves most inequitous. At the same time, there will be public appreciation when priority in the reservation is extended to the poorer among the underprivileged.

What is important to note is that an issue of such magnitude for socioeconomic advance of the deprived millions should have been turned into a bitter political battle with no real justification whatsoever.

Extraordinary

It is extraordinary that senior leaders with an ample fund of political experience should have permitted such bitterness to vitiate the entire environment when they themselves were ultimately to acknowledge the validity of the measure itself.

It is the wisdom of Mr. Narasimha Rao's commitment to the consensus approach that has finally brought the curtain down on one of the most sordid episodes of present-day politics in this country.

VHP Secretary General Talks to Press

92AS0147A Madras *THE HINDU* in English
7 Oct 91 p 9

[Article: "Steps on for Temple Construction: VHP"; quotation marks as published]

[Text] Ahmedabad, Oct. 6. The general secretary of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad [VHP], Mr. Ashok Singhal, today said arrangements for men and material for the construction of Sri Ram temple at Ayodhya were on in full swing and the work would start anytime within 80 days from October 18.

Addressing a press conference here Mr. Singhal said the Uttar Pradesh [U.P.] Chief Minister, Mr. Kalyan Singh, had assured the VHP that he would remove all hurdles for construction of the temple.

Renovation was being carried out by the Ramananda Acharya Peeth and the Ram Janmabhoomi Trust, he said, adding that the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] and the VHP were extending all help to them. Mr. Singhal said he agreed with the statement of BJP leaders that the reconstruction of the temple was not the responsibility of the BJP.

Mr. Singhal said reconstruction would commence from the 'shilanyas sthan' and there would not be any construction work presently in the sanctum sanctorum which falls in the disputed area.

Talks with Muslims: The U.P. Government was having talks with Muslims on relocation of the mosque and if the talks failed the State Government should enact a legislation to facilitate the reconstruction, Mr. Singhal said.

Asked whether the Centre would thwart their attempt, he said 'the Centre would not dare to intervene against the people's mandate which favoured reconstruction.'

Mr. Singhal warned the Centre of dire consequences if it directly or indirectly opposed the reconstruction or stopped the kar sevaks who would converge at Ayodhya.

The Centre could have resolved the issue by enacting a legislation and allowing reconstruction of temples at Ayodhya, Mathura and Varanasi, as demanded by the VHP, he said.

'We demanded reconstruction of only three of the 30,000 temples demolished and not the demolition of any mosque, as that was against the Hindu ethos,' he said, adding that even today the demand was only for relocation and not demolition of the mosque at Ayodhya.

Centre criticised: Mr. Singhal criticised the Centre for not paying any heed to their demand. Instead, it had recently enacted a legislation on places of worship, which was contradictory in nature. On one hand, the recent Act legitimised all conversion of places of worship prior to 1947 and, on the other, 'we are being told that no reconstruction of temples are allowed now,' he said.—PTI, UNI

Congress(I) Seen Going Through Identity Crisis

92AS0020A New Delhi *JANSATTA* in Hindi
17 Sep 91 p 6

[Article by Alok Tomar: "Is This Congress or a Parody of Congress?"]

[Text] What kind of option is the Congress Party in this nation and what else it could be? This question has been repeatedly asked sometimes because of perceptual difference and other times just out of irritation. The question is asked by people like you and me and based on our experience we answer that neither a non-Congress option has ever been offered in Indian politics nor was such a possibility discussed. The truth is that our nation has been ruled either by the Congress Party or by those who had defected from it. Those who reached the corridors of the government after rebelling because of the Bofors scandal and getting the mandate from the people were also Congressites at one time. They were not just common members of the Congress Party, but those who were fully devoted and from-birth-to-death type of genuine Congress devotees. Morarji Desai was Indira Gandhi's finance minister;

Charan Singh was an old Congress leader and had become prime minister with the help of the Congress Party; and Jagjivan Ram who became a messiah overnight for introducing the emergency bill in the Parliament and who never gave up the dream of becoming the prime minister of the new government; they were all Congress Party members. Vidyacharan Shukla, who originally engineered press censorship and was part of the rebellion, has also returned to the Congress Party and is a cabinet member now. A few years ago Vishwanath Pratap Singh would have been speechless even at the thought of working without the support of Rajiv Gandhi and Congress Party's 100-year old tradition. According to Ramvilas Paswan, what he did after breaking the support and the tradition has become part of our history.

What exactly are the facts? What role will the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the other left-wing parties play? No one, except the ideologists of these parties, had said anything seriously about it. The BJP has emerged for the first time as the strongest party after the recent elections. However, it did not replace the Congress Party; it won the election using the name of Rama and promising real secularism instead of the false secularism (this term was coined by the BJP). The real philosophy of the party cannot be kept hidden from such people as Aarif Beg and Sikandar Bakht. Despite this all, today's democratic truth is that the BJP is the second greatest power after the Congress Party in the nation. It can keep the Congress Party as an election hostage because of its weak condition.

When election results are analyzed and an honest percentage of votes is figured out, the coffee-house analysts declare with an intellectual gloom that the Congress Party had managed to form a government despite never getting more than 40 percent of the votes. The bottom line of this argument is that if the opposition parties unite, they could defeat the Congress Party with their 60-percent votes. In other words, the unity should be against the Congress Party; not for the nation, just for opposing the Congress Party. Following this desire, many parties form odd coalitions. Dindayal Upadhyaye, Lohia, and those whose idol is Lenin targeted the Congress Party and succeeded in forming government twice. What happens after that? They end up as a more awkward and shameless parody of the Congress Party. Those who visualize revolution suddenly become Jats, Harijans, formers, left wingers, or south wingers, and everything comes asunder. The Congress Party returns like the disciplined army of slaves' and becomes an attractive product by mixing some socialism, some equation of castes, and sycophancy.

The Janata Dal met its expected fate. The Janata Party managed to survive for two or two and one-half years because it was not a coalition party, but did suffer from internal strife. When Raj Narain made trouble, he was stopped by Lal Karishna Advani and when George Fernandez had some objections, Charan Singh would silence him with even greater objection. Morarji would sit wishing them all well and ran the country as if he were writing a personal diary! However, they did not focus on one person. As long as Jai Prakash Narain was there, he

had his mark of self-discipline on all. However, Jaya Prakash Narain could not become another Mahatma Gandhi. Similarly, Vishwanath Pratap Singh, in spite of all public support and good wishes, could not become Jaya Prakash Narain.

This does not mean that our nation is in such a precarious condition that only a Mahatma Gandhi can save it. Had Gandhi succeeded, the Congress Party would have been dissolved in 1948. Technically, it did dissolve, but it emerged as collection of living symbols after the independence. Jawahar Lal Nehru, Indira Gandhi, and for some time Rajiv Gandhi embodied the Congress Party. Now some people are trying to make Sonia Gandhi the symbol of Congress Party. The day is not far when, after Sonia's refusal, Rahul or Pariyanka Gandhi will be declared the symbol of Congress Party. People like Kalapnath Rai, Sitaram Kesariya, and Satish Sharma will declare the Nehru dynasty the only real Indian standard.

When the Janata Dal was formed, as you may recall, it had popular support. Later, just like the Bombay-made movie plots, V.P. Singh became the hero in every scene. The main forces behind the popular front, Ramdhan, Ake Hengel [name as published], and Om Prakash were pushed back to play minor roles.

You will also remember that this people's front was not political in the beginning. Those who were upset with the Congress Party and unhappy with Rajiv Gandhi's immature behavior had formed a people's platform to avoid the party-changing law backlash. (However, the law did affect Satyapal Malik later.) Later, Chandra Shekhar also joined this group after a lot of changes had happened. At that time, Ajit Singh, president of the Socialist Janata Dal, relinquished his chair to form a new front. Chandra Shekhar accepted V.P. Singh as the president of the Janata Dal (later, during the no-confidence motion, he said that he had done that unwillingly and under pressure). After the elections, Devi Lal enacted the drama in which he put his crown on V.P. Singh's forehead. He wanted a major credit for this development and used it for shaking up the government later. All of Chandra Shekhar's characteristics were pure Congress characteristics even when he was in the Janata Dal. His style did not change even after 12 years of absence from the Congress Party. He had learned the skill of having his enemies fight among themselves while in the party and used it effectively during the Ram Karishan Hegde incident. He also took the initiative to include Ajit Singh into Janata Dal. He said that Ajit Singh would attract Jats and backward castes because he was Charan Singh's son. What could one say when the self-styled socialist Chandra Shekhar used the line about Jats?

Meanwhile, V.P. Singh announced as soon as he became the messiah of the opposition that there was no need to keep the people's front alive. It was straight Congress formula. Push away the ladder you use to go up! He had moved from being number-two in the cabinet to being number-one in the opposition. He declared in several of his speeches that several parties joining the Janata Dal and the National Front were pressuring him to dissolve the

people's front. The people's front is still there, however, only as a signboard on a bungalow on Rajendra Prasad Road and in the form of Ram Dhan. Aarif Mohammed Khan was against dissolving the people's front and he had a verbal fight with Rampujan Patel over it. Aarif Mohammed Khan said that this was not an issue of double membership because the members of the Farmers Trust and All Indian Muslim group were also members of the Janata Dal.

What happened later was a clear democratic misfortune. Devi Lal pouted and was brought round like a child. He followed the practice of "if I am not allowed to play I will not let anyone play" and accepted the post of deputy prime minister from Chandra Shekhar who had accused him of treachery before. Mulayam Singh Yadav, who had touched V.P. Singh's feet after winning his election, separated himself. Chiman Bhai Patel, who left no stone unturned to save V.P. Singh's government for a long time, cooperated with the Congress Party to open door for Chandra Shekhar. We have read that history repeats itself, however, it was for the first time when we saw history repeat itself so rapidly.

The left-wing parties, which call themselves Marxists and are never tired of saying that they will have the workers rule the world, cannot forget their role during the emergency and their submission to Indira Gandhi. They knew well this time around that the BJP may have joined the coalition and supported the V.P. Singh government and the government would fall once the question of Ayodhya arose. The truth is that the Janata Dal saw a more distorted form of the BJP. The two parties supporting the same government were fighting like two jealous wives. The left-wing parties who supported the BJP for a short time can argue that BJP was going to get stuck over the Ayodhya issue and staying with V.P. Singh during that time would get them certified as nonsectarian. They did get that. If we take a close look at the politics of that time, we will find that the left-wing parties were sitting at a point between the Congress and the BJP. They are closer to the BJP for having strong workers and being strong believers. A look at Jayoti Basu's government can tell us that they could teach a few tricks to the Congress Party in the areas of raising funds, making the industrialists feel obligated, and managing election campaigns.

After the failure of this revolution, Janata Dal and BJP's experiments becoming jokes, and the whole change process losing credibility, what choice does the janata (not the party, but the people) have now? The Janata Dal and the BJP shine and the people suffer. Who knows how long will the people have to suffer these parodies of Congress Party and these Congressites wearing the masks of revolutionaries.

Young Congress-I MPs Hold Unofficial Meet

Parallel Youth Group

92AS0091A Madras INDIAN EXPRESS in English
18 Sep 91 p 1

[Text] New Delhi, 17 Sep (Express News Service)—In a major show of strength a group of former Youth Congress

[YC] functionaries and 'young' Congress-I MPs [members of Parliament] launched here on Tuesday a forum parallel to the party's youth wing.

The convention of 'young parliamentarians' which was attended by 59 party MPs marked the beginning of a new phase of factionalism within the ruling party. Though invited, the YC president, Mr. Ramesh Chennithala, did not attend the youth meet.

Briefing the press, the Union Minister for Surface Transport, Mr. Jagdish Tytler, one of the key figures behind the show, said that the state units of the new forum would be set up soon. Asked why the present YC office-bearers were not involved in the convention, Mr. Tytler said, "we did not want to make it a big tamasha." The Minister pointed out that Mr. Chennithala who had attended Parliament on Monday, "informed us this morning that he was sick."

This new Congress-I pressure group is seen as the platform of the Rajiv loyalists who are now keen to assert themselves collectively in the absence of their mentor. Significantly the Prime Minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, who has always adopted a conciliatory rather than confrontationist approach, is scheduled to address the second session of the convention on Wednesday. According to the organisers over 200 invitees participated in the meet. Among the 11 union ministers present at the convention were Mr. Madhavrao Scindia, Mr. P. Chidambaram and Mr. P.J. Kurien. The rather good response to the convention could be attributed to the persuasive skills of the Parliamentary Affairs Minister, Mr. Gulam Nabi Azad, the prime mover of the show. Interestingly, Mr. Krip Chaliha, MP, and YC general secretary, was also present.

However, Mr. Ramchandra Rath, a former YC president, is learnt to have remarked in his speech that the party leaders recalled their former colleagues only when they faced a difficult situation. Meanwhile, Mr. Chennithala had a meeting with the Prime Minister on Monday evening. He complained that this new pressure group might work against Mr. Rao. Indeed a look at the guest list confirms that it was the show of those Congress-I politicians not known for their proximity to the Prime Minister.

Rao Addresses Meet

92AS0091B Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English
19 Sep 91 p 4

[Text] New Delhi, 18 Sep—Proxy war among top leaders amidst a show of superficial unity marked the two-day convention of young Congress(I) parliamentarians, who called for a national debate on centre-state relations and a movement to counter the spread of communalism by the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] and the VHP [Vishwa Hindu Parishad].

The highlight of the convention, which was boycotted by the official youth Congress(I) was the address by the Prime Minister Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao. He promised to hold

organisational elections by the end of the year and a total decentralisation of the party's functioning down to the grassroots level.

Mr. Rao called upon the gathering to re-establish the lost link with the people and the traditional vote banks. He said this would ensure the party's victory in the 17 byelections to the Lok Sabha thereby giving it a majority of its own in the House.

While the Prime Minister's presence gave official recognition to the convention, it also amply demonstrated the ongoing tug-of-war inside the party with leaders busy asserting their own positions.

A suggestion by the West Bengal leader, Mr. Priya Ranjan Das Munshi, that Mrs. Sonia Gandhi should join active politics as a symbol of the Gandhi-Nehru philosophy got applause but was dropped without being given the shape of a resolution.

'Sonia Card'

Mr. Das Munshi still belongs to the Sharad Pawar camp, known for its opposition to Mrs. Sonia Gandhi leading the party. Mr. Das Munshi suggestion which was backed by Mr. Madhavrao Scindia is being seen as a move to snatch the "Sonia card" from Mr. Arjun Singh, another potential prime ministerial candidate.

In another major move yesterday, Mr. Scindia suggested that the party adopt the one-person-one-post formula with the sole exception of Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, who has been holding twin posts of Prime Minister and AICC(I) [All India Congress Committee-India] president. In effect, his campaign was against Mr. Arjun Singh, who is the human resource minister as well as president of the Madhya Pradesh Congress committee.

Centre State Ties

The convention passed a resolution which called for a debate on Centre-state relations, a campaign against communalism and the creation of about a million jobs during the eighth Plan period.

Mr. Ghulam Nabi Azad, now considered a protege of the welfare minister, Mr. Sitaram Kesri, assured the Prime Minister that young parliamentarians were with him in his move to revamp the party and for a more democratic government. His rivals, however, alleged that Mr. Kesri and Mr. Azad are using this forum to emerge as "the powerful duo" in the present setup.

In his 20-minute-speech, the Prime Minister said some Youth Congress members had complained that Mr. Azad was trying to demonstrate his strength through this convention. "I told them that I would revive the strength of the Congress(I) and if youths become cynical, the country has no future," he said.

Any convention with Congress ideology is welcome. If Congress is to come to its own self, elections are necessary, come what may," he said.

Turning to Mr. Azad, he said now the organisers had to mobilise youths and to go to the electorate to ensure victory in the byelections. "Whether we enjoy absolute majority or not depends on the outcome of the byelections and your strength can bring positive results," he said.

BJP National Executive Meets 29-30 Sep

Economic Resolution Passed

92AS0103A *Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English*
30 Sep 91 pp 1, 11

[Article by V.R. Mani: "BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] Seeks White Paper on Economy"]

[Text] Thiruvananthapuram, 29 Sep (The Times of India News Service)—The BJP today demanded a white paper on the economic situation, including the foreign debt position and conditions of the International Monetary Fund and other foreign-funding agencies.

In the economic resolution adopted at the opening session of the party's two-day national executive, the BJP said that a law should be enacted to provide a constitutional ceiling on external debt. To improve the balance of payments position, the party advised the government to formulate schemes to tap NRI [nonresident Indians] resources and talents. It suggested that provision of dual citizenship be extended to the NRIs.

The party noted that the people had the right to know more about the conditions on which the recent loans had been taken and keeping the people in the dark amounted to betrayal of their interests.

The party also demanded the formulation of an agriculture policy and total restoration of fertilizer subsidy.

On the fertilizer issue, the party vice-president, Mr. S.S. Bhandari, said at the press briefing that the BJP chief ministers have decided to provide full subsidy and the additional expenditure burden this would entail should be borne by the centre. When asked what the chief ministers would do if the centre refused to bear the burden, he said that the states would do so.

Mr. Bhandari also revealed that the party will launch a country-wide agitation against the price rise and the "anti-people policy" of the Congress government. The programme of the agitation would be decided tomorrow.

The executive noted with distress and deep concern the "dismal economic performance" of the central government. "It is a clear case of failure of political leadership in governance to instil confidence among the economic performers," it said.

The resolution said that the government ought to have adopted an integrated policy approach to such areas as trade, the exchange rate, industry, energy, transport, science and technology and agriculture.

The party also demanded a categorical assurance from the government that there will be no further devaluation. The earlier devaluation had already led to an escalation of prices of items with higher import intensity instead of export promotion, it said.

The party also demanded a drastic cut in non-plan expenditure and that austerity measures be implemented. If the industrial pattern is changed, priorities fixed and the small-scale sector strengthened, resources could be raised without resorting to additional loans and taxation, Mr. Bhandari said at the press briefing.

The resolution said that the government denied adequate financial assistance and protection to the SSI [small-scale industrial?] sector. Therefore, adequate protection and promotion of SSIs must be ensured and the budget for this sector enhanced.

Among the other demands of the party are specific guidelines for speedy "de-governmentalisation" of the public sector, the strengthening of the PDS [Petrochemicals Data Services], the promotion of research into the substitution of petroleum products, a separate ministry for handloom and handicraft sector, the setting up of an artisan bank, stringent action against economic offenders and drug traffickers and the raising of the income tax exemption limit to Rs[rupees]48,000.

Prasun Sonwalkar adds that for the first time in a long while, the foreign policy of the BJP was the subject of an intense debate today on the opening day of the party's national executive, with the result that the draft resolution was virtually rejected and a sub-committee formed to make "major fundamental changes" in it.

Reflecting the growing importance the party now attaches to international affairs, members of the executive were involved in an inconclusive debate favouring major changes in the party's policy in the light of the changes taking place round the world. The discussions indicated a shift in the party's policy on Israel, Tibet and China.

Significantly, the former external affairs minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, took the unusual step of briefing the press on the draft resolution even while the discussions were on. The reason he gave was that he had to rush to Delhi this afternoon for urgent parliamentary work, but party sources indicated that differences had cropped up between the hardliners, represented by the RSS [Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh] elements, and the liberals, identified with Mr. Vajpayee.

The resolution will now be adopted tomorrow. The party's foreign policy, which has always been a nubulous area, will be clearly enunciated in the resolution.

Party sources said issues relating to the developments in the Soviet Union and adopting a tougher line on Pakistan to be included in the resolution.

The three areas where a shift was clearly discernible were related to Israel, Tibet and China, as the remarks of Mr. Vajpayee indicated. The earlier stand in favour of freedom

for Tibet was not mentioned. Instead, he spoke of human rights being respected there. He said efforts should be made to improve relations with China and the controversial boundary questions could be taken up later. Till recently, the BJP was against talks with China until it vacated Indian territory occupied by it.

Reiterating the party's stand favouring full diplomatic relation with Israel, Mr. Vajpayee, however, said Israel should vacate the areas it had occupied, a proviso not mentioned earlier. "The party would like the government to have a second look at the policy regarding West Asia," he said and favoured upgrading Israeli presence in India to that of a consulate in Delhi.

Calling for talks with China on areas of mutual interest, Mr. Vajpayee said the party would like India to have friendly ties with all neighbouring countries, but Pakistan was an irritant. "There is an indication of a change in U.S. attitude towards Pakistan, but that is not enough. Clear, unequivocal signals should be sent to Islamabad that it should stop blatant interference in our domestic affairs," he said.

Mr. Vajpayee demanded a high-level probe into the reasons for the "deteriorating state of affairs in the ONGC [Oil and Natural Gas Commission]."

Political Resolution Discussed

92AS0103B Madras *THE HINDU* in English
30 Sep 91 p 9

[Text] Thiruvananthapuram, 29 Sep—A strong, unambiguous signal from the Western democracies, especially from the United States, to Pakistan to desist from meddling in India's internal affairs, a realistic response from the Third World countries to the emergence of the 'Euro-American alliance' as a 'super alliance' with the former Superpower, the Soviet Union playing the role of a junior partner, a restructuring of India's diplomacy, starting of a dialogue with China, and a second look at the country's West Asia policy, are the highlights of the BJP's [Bharatiya Janata Party] resolution on foreign policy.

The party's National Executive, which discussed the resolution at its morning session here, however, did not pass it as the meeting felt that the resolution should also spell out the party's perception of the Soviet developments as well. For that purpose, a three-member committee, headed by Mr. Brijesh Mishra, has been set up. The resolution is now expected to come up again at tomorrow's meeting of the Executive.

Speaking to presspersons on the contents of the resolution, the BJP leader, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, pointed out that while India was being hailed as the largest democracy in the world, when it came to a choice between India and Pakistan the Western democracies tilted towards the latter.

"We have been receiving economic aid but Pakistan was given arms. India has been under pressure for long to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty but the Western

countries could not prevent Pakistan from becoming a nuclear power. Clearly, the attempt is to establish parity between India and Pakistan.

"We would like to have friendly relations with our neighbours, including Pakistan. But when Pakistan openly interferes in our internal affairs, organising training camps and supplying arms to terrorists in Punjab and Kashmir, it is for the international community to exert pressure on Pakistan to stop interfering in the internal affairs of India.

"There is some indication of a change in the attitude of Washington but the change is not adequate enough. A strong and unequivocal signal must go to Pakistan asking it to stop forthwith this blatant interference in our domestic affairs."

The resolution wants the country's foreign policy to be so re-ordered as to "maximise the number of our friends abroad." For that purpose diplomacy must be more vigorous to ensure support and understanding on matters of vital interest. The BJP would like economic diplomacy to be integrated with conventional diplomacy. The head of mission in every country must be given personal charge of economic and commercial work.

Ties With Israel Mooted

The party would like the Government to have a second look at its West Asia policy. It wants an international conference to find a solution to the West Asian problem and the Government to have full diplomatic relations with Israel. If that is not immediately possible then Israel should be allowed to open a Consulate-General in Delhi.

Of course, Israel has to vacate the entire Arab territory it has occupied, Mr. Vajpayee said. "We have been in favour of a Palestinian State but all Arab States must recognise Israel's right to exist within specified boundaries," he added.

Responding to another question on West Asia, Mr. Vajpayee said, "I think the U.S. President, Mr. George Bush, is taking a more reasonable attitude on this issue. I would like to compliment him on that."

Relations With China

The BJP, Mr. Vajpayee said, was in favour of initiating a political dialogue with China on international, regional questions and issues of mutual interest and concern. The boundary question between the two countries had to be settled in a fair and equitable manner but pending a solution, Government of India should take steps to normalise relations with China. Asked about Tibet and its status, Mr. Vajpayee said it always had been a ticklish one. We would like human rights to be respected in Tibet. Other problems could be discussed later on.

A correspondent asked: "Do you think that the Sino-Indian dispute can be solved on a give and take basis?" Mr. Vajpayee replied: "Who is to give is the question. China continues to occupy large chunk of Indian territory. And

that is why I said that the boundary question has to be settled in fair and equitable manner.

Mr. Vajpayee said the Executive would discuss separately the Sri Lankan situation with special reference to the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam].

On Kashmir, Mr. Vajpayee said the area under Pakistani occupation was part of Kashmir and Kashmir was an integral part of India. If India had kept up pressure, it could have wrested that area but during the Shimla Agreement, Indira Gandhi almost conceded the right of Pakistan to hold on to the territory in its possession. This was what encouraged Pakistan to launch terrorist activities in Kashmir. Otherwise the present situation would not have arisen.

"Do you visualise the growth of a Pan-Islamic empire, especially after the Soviet developments, there are quite a few Islamic republics which have become free," a correspondent asked. "Let us wait and see how the situation develops. That fundamentalism is on the rise is clear," Mr. Vajpayee said.

Asked if, in view of the emergence of the Euro-American alliance and the threat it posed to developing nations, the BJP could have a closer understanding with the Left, especially, the CPI(M) [Communist Party of India-Marxist], Mr. Vajpayee said: "I do not know. They are yet to recover from the shock of what has happened in Russia and Eastern Europe."

"The Left parties continue to talk of Western imperialism. We do not agree with their assessment. Colonialism has almost ended. Racism is almost on its last leg in South Africa. There is no threat of colonialism. Now all developing countries should guard against the new Euro-American alliance as a superpower. What we need is a multi-polar world."

Regarding U.S. pressure on India, Mr. Vajpayee said: "We have said that all conditionalities suggested by the IMF must be placed before the people. We are going to repeat that in our economic resolution. The United States has no business to dictate terms. We are a big country, we are a strong country, comparatively speaking. So India has to stand up against such pressures.

"What about the position of Japan and South Korea?" They occupy very important positions and discussions have to be initiated with them. In fact we would like the SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] and the ASEAN countries to identify areas of cooperation to come together," he said.

Conclusions Reached

92AS0103C Madras *THE HINDU* in English
1 Oct 91 p 9

[Text] Thiruvananthapuram, 30 Sep—From Ram Rajya to "dharma yudha," Kashmir is to be adopted as the symbol of the multi-faceted threat to Bharat Mata's unity and integrity and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is to be

projected as the only party with the political vigour to meet this national challenge. The symbolism is to change from the Ramayana to the Mahabharata, and "dharma yudha" is the new slogan, the name of the political strategy being worked out.

From now to the next general elections—whether they are held in the next two or three years or later—the political strategy will revolve around this spiritual battle to protect the national honour, the country's integrity, while the party hopes to fully exploit the coming winter of discontent on the prices and inflation front.

The BJP national executive committee meeting which today finalised one of its main political resolutions—on national unity and integrity—will soon announce an "action plan" that is in the final stages and is expected to be given the green signal by the top party leadership. The strategy for this action plan, the "dharma yudha," could include a "Kashmir chalo" call and an all-India campaign to protest against the crushing price rise. The party is also likely to exploit the "minority and weak" character of the Narasimha Rao Government which has been sending "contrary signals" to the forces of disintegration.

A five member committee, with Mr. K.L. Sharma as convenor, will finalise the "action plan." Its other members are Mr. Pramod Mahajan and Mr. Madan Lal Khurana, both all India general secretaries, Mr. Narendra Modi, general secretary of the Gujarat unit, and Mr. V. Naidu, president of the Andhra Pradesh unit of the party.

To Project Itself

The BJP is to clearly project itself as the only party that can provide a clear cut direction and a leadership capable of handling the difficult political and economic situation.

It had been calculated that the coming Lok Sabha by-elections will show how far the present Narashimha Rao Government can survive. The Amethi election may well lead to open cracks in the party and by February around the time of the next budget, the BJP feels, the Congress(I) will begin to collapse. The BJP's next big political jamboree will be held sometime in February when its National Council of about 800 members is expected to meet. The exact dates and venue is yet to be decided.

The party's assessment is that during the course of the by-elections and the coming Presidential elections the Congress(I) will begin to show the chinks in its armour, and BJP should be well-prepared to meet this political eventuality.

Mr. Advani today also announced that the final decision on the Lok Sabha elections would be taken in New Delhi by the second week of October. But one thing was certain. The BJP would oppose and fight the Congress(I) in Amethi and the two constituencies from where the Prime Minister and the Defence Minister, Mr. Sharad Pawar are expected to seek re-election, Nandyal and Baramati.

Strong Attack

The political resolution of the party is a strong attack on the Government's "vacillating and weak policy" towards terrorists in Punjab, Kashmir, Assam or any other part of the country. "The two Governors, Mr. Jagmohan in Kashmir and General Malhotra in Punjab, who had taken a strong stand against terrorists were not only removed but humiliated," Mr. Advani said. "I also wish the V.P. Singh Government had realised that the Rubaiya (daughter of the then Home Minister) kidnapping case was not an isolated incident."

In Assam the Government has admitted ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam] links with foreign powers. Here again "mixed signals" led to Operation Bajrang being interrupted by elections and now superseded by Operation Rhino. In Andhra Pradesh the Congress(I) and Telugu Desam competition for getting naxalite support has further complicated matters.

The political resolution also hits out at the Sri Lanka-LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] policy of the Government and Mr. Advani stated that in his view the Jayalalitha Government was at least doing something as against the previous DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] Government which inflicted much damage to the Tamil Nadu policy. He was critical of the Union Home Minister's repeated statements that the Government was ready to talk to the militants. Such statements give legitimacy to terrorists, he said.

On the issue of reservations, the BJP has claimed that the other parties, including the Congress(I) but excluding Janata Dal, were now coming around to the views crystallised by the BJP way back in 1985 and reiterated in its election manifestos of 1989 and 1991. A detailed resolution on this is expected to be finalised by late tonight or tomorrow morning. This issue is certainly creating some political problems for the party, but the leadership is clear that this opportunity to expand its political base must not be lost.

The "dharma yudha" of the BJP will be its fight for power at the Centre.

BJP: Urged To Counter Islamabad Lobby in West

92AS0086D Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English
2 Oct 91 p 8

[Text] As was to be expected, the two-day meeting of the Bharatiya Janata Party's [BJP] national executive updated its approach to current political questions. The treatment of two of them, however, stood out. The vice-president, Mr S.S. Bhandari, disclosed on the first day that the BJP would not withdraw fertilizer subsidy to farmers in the four States where it is in power. Mr L.K. Advani had to retract Mr Bhandari's statement as well as he could the following day. In effect, the BJP-run States will not be restoring the subsidy. But its central leadership failed to dispel the notion that it had to make the volte-face after realizing that the subsidy would be dispensed by the States

and not the Center. The second was the party's visibly mellowed outlook on Ayodhya. (No date was announced for the temple construction on the disputed site even at the Vishwa Hindu Parishad-convened conference at Rishikesh despite the hawkish rhetoric which emanated from its spokesman). But this did not remove the impression that the party was trying to save its Government in UP [Uttar Pradesh] from a potentially destabilizing controversy. Whatever the internal compulsions behind the BJP and its frontal organization's apparent indecisiveness both the Center and secular sections of national opinion will be relieved that the party restrained itself from precipitating another violent showdown.

On other issues the party retained its characteristics bellicosity and its plans to launch an agitation to underscore "threats" to Indian unity should reassure its rank and file that the quest for national power is still on. Even if it considered the responses of non-Congress Opposition parties "perverse", the BJP leadership is mistaken if it thinks that the wider national electorate will find the hawkishness it demonstrated at Thiruvananthapuram wholly comforting. Though the granting of general amnesty to the United Liberation Front of Assam detainees by the Assam Government has left little to be desired, the National Front Government, which the BJP supported from outside, was not innocent of the manner in which its Asom Gana Parishad constituent turned a blind eye to the growth of irredentism in the State, subsequently compelling the Congress(I) Ministry to experiment with untried methods to find a solution. Similarly, the party's blanket criticism of the Centers handling of the Kashmir crisis, which it aggravated by advocating an unimaginative hardline against disenchanted rebels, does not in any way constitute a constructive approach to problem-solving. The need to mobilize international opinion against Pakistan's interference in Punjab and Kashmir is, however, acute and the BJP could help the national cause by exercising its influence with its Non-Resident Indian following to counteract Islamabad's determined lobbying in Western capitals.

Janata Dal Seen Collapsing
91AS1574B New Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi
10 Sep 91 p 6

[Article by Sunil Dutt Panday: "Janata Dal Faces Just This Fate"]

[Text] The Janata Dal is fighting the last battle to save itself. One camp of the Janata Dal is willing to cooperate with the Congress(I) in the Rajiv-less Indian politics scenario. As soon as Narasimha Rao became prime minister, Ajit Singh and Biju Patnayak decided to cooperate with the Congress(I). Recently another major leader of the Janata Dal, Ramkarishan Hegde has also talked about a merger of the Congress(I) and the Janata Dal.

Lately there have been talks about a merger. When ten members of the Parliament issued a press release, this caused a great deal of hue and cry within the Janata Dal. Mr. Ramvilas Paswan and Sharad Yadav, the two leaders

who want to keep the Janata Dal alive, forced these Parliament members to take back their statement about the Congress(I)-Janata Dal merger. All this indicates that some power-hungry Janata Dal leaders want to become ministers, and have forgotten the slogan of social justice that they had raised during the elections. Some Janata Dal leaders just cannot forget their problems after enjoying power for one and one-half years. Therefore, Janata Dal leaders start something new within their party every day.

Devi Lal and Chandra Shekhar have already damaged the image of the Janata Dal. Their work is being complimented by Ajit Singh, V.P. Singh, Ramvilas Paswan, and Sharad Yadav. The issue raised by Ajit Singh is clouding the whole picture. Whenever the issue is ready to be resolved, some leader will throw in a monkey wrench. When Ajit Singh went into the background, Mr. V.P. Singh made matters worse by resigning as parliamentary leader. The four-person reconciliation committee failed to resolve the differences between Bommai and Ajit Singh. The four members of the committee got tired and are now silent. This committee had to be disbanded. Now Mr. Bommai has been given the responsibility of resolving the party's problems. Even after the Bommai-Ajit breakfast meeting, the conflict within the Janata Dal does not seem to have ended. The Janata Dal leaders are very skilled in exaggerating any issue. They know very well how to make a mountain out of a molehill.

The Janata Dal has to have internal strife. If it did not, why would it be called the Janata Dal? If you wish to learn how to cheapen even a well-established party, take lessons from the Janata Dal. The taste of power that the party leaders had for one and one-half years will not leave their tongues now. Chowdhery Ajit Singh and company cannot forget this taste. Chowdhery Ajit Singh has an eye on the cabinet position of protected industry, currently being managed by the prime minister. Meanwhile, V.P. Singh, Paswan, and Sharad Yadav all want to sell their own wares and leadership, and simply cannot tolerate any leaders that give them competition. They do not care what happens to the party. The major leaders of the Janata Dal are busy throwing darts at each other, and are not working to improve the image of the party. These leaders have made their party like a dilapidated bedsheet; if you patch it, it causes a hole. Now there is nothing left to put a patch on.

The Janata Dal is on the verge of collapse. No one will be surprised or disheartened by it. V.P. Singh, Ajit Singh, Paswan, and Sharad Yadav should be relieved. They will get along well in the leftover party. These opposition leaders have not changed even after 14 years. The Janata Dal will neither be able to form a social justice platform, nor will it be able to help in the secular movement. The people have lost faith in the party, which has become divided among several factions.

The opposition leaders have often played with the feelings of the people. Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan started a popular movement in 1974 to raise political awareness. He brought all the non-Congress parties together on one platform. The people established the Janata Party [J.P.],

which was born in the dark cell of troubles, on the throne of Delhi with great hopes and zeal. However, because of these rival leaders, the dreams of the people and J.P. were crushed. J.P. was still alive when the so-called leaders of the Janata Party destroyed the party after hurting the peoples' feelings and disappointing them. After Mr. Gandhi was assassinated, Congressites used his name to assassinate him daily with their deeds. But these rival leaders, hungry for power and position, cheated the people right in front of J.P. The socialist leaders played an important role in hurting the Janata Party and the Janata Dal. There is an old fable that says that if a monkey is given a fancy house, he will destroy it and be left homeless, and return to living in a tree, because his destiny is to hang from a tree. The political events of 1979 and 1991 remind us of this fable.

The people who were disappointed in Rajiv Gandhi voted the opposition into power in 1989. Before and after getting into power, the Janata Dal leaders had been assuring the people that they would not repeat the events of 1979. The people did not believe them. Still, they decided to give them another, and their last, chance. In spite of their promises of unity, the Janata Dal proved to be liars again. In 1979, these leaders had managed to stay together for two years. In 1989, these leaders could not stay together for even one year. The act that Chandra Shekhar had accused Chowdhery Charan Singh of in 1979, he himself committed in 1990, when he became prime minister. Last year Mr. Ajit Singh, the party leader, took Chandra Shekhar to task when the party was broken up. Now Ajit Singh himself is doing exactly that, with pride. These rival leaders have shown the difference between their talk and their tasks. They themselves are responsible for their loss of the peoples' trust.

The biggest problem within the Janata Dal is that almost all of its small and big leaders are extremely ambitious. They have changed parties if their ambitions were not fulfilled. After being members of different parties, these Janata Dal leaders have appeared before the people behind the mask of the Janata Party, Janata Dal, and National Front just to fulfill these ambitions. Now the people are very confused.

CPI, CPI-M Differ on Left Reunification

Gupta Statement Reported

92AS0098A Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English
13 Sep 91 p 4

[Text] New Delhi, 12 Sep—The CPI [Communist Party of India] today renewed its call for a serious dialogue between the two Indian Communist parties to explore the possibilities of forming a "united party," but at the same time underlined the differences with the CPI(M) [Communist Party of India-Marxist] on the analysis of the events in the Soviet Union.

In a statement, the CPI general secretary, Mr. Indrajit Gupta, referred to a recent article written by the CPI(M) general secretary, Mr. E.M.S. Namboodiripad, in which he

spoke of the continuing differences between the two parties which came in the way of programmatic unity.

Giving the CPI's version, Mr. Gupta said, "It is not correct, as alleged by Mr. Namboodiripad, that the CPI leadership has been demanding merger of the two parties without any conditions or principled basis. But we certainly stand for reunification of the Indian communist movement on the basis of agreed principles and an agreed programme. This naturally presupposes an open and serious dialogue between the two major Communist Parties (but not excluding others also) in order to evolve agreement on what precisely the principles and programme of a united party should be. To shy away from such a constructive dialogue because of what happened more than a quarter of century ago is a totally negative posture."

Pointing out that even Mr. Namboodiripad conceded that the two parties had come together in practical politics, Mr. Gupta rhetorically asked, "Why not recognise that much water has flown down the Ganges since 1964 and the situation now calls for a comprehensive and self-critical reassessment of realities, both national and international? In today's concrete political, economic and social circumstances, who is benefiting from the schism in the Indian communist movement except its worst enemies and detractors?"

Attack Against CPM Stance

Mr. Gupta went on to obliquely criticise the CPI(M)'s stance regarding the developments in the Soviet Union and said, "At this stage, the CPI prefers not to deliver a final judgement on the still evolving developments in the USSR and not hurl epithets like anti-Marxist, anti-Communist and revisionist against this or that leader of a fraternal party. This much is clear that no Communist Party today can ignore democratic values and norms, or give support, direct or indirect, to methods of unconstitutional and conspiratorial coups such as were witnessed recently."

He added, "Our friends and comrades in the CPI(M) should realise that, at a time when democracy, progress, secularism, national unity and socialist principles are threatened as never before by the reactionary Rightist forces of fundamentalism, secessionism and social justice and the aggressive hegemonic designs of U.S. imperialism, the need for consolidation of the Left is an urgent necessity."

The CPI(M) is learnt to have taken note of Mr. Gupta's statement and is likely to give a reply in a day or two. The CPI(M) is likely to reiterate that certain fundamental differences of perception between the two communist parties persist and have been accentuated by the changes in the international communist movement.

Response From CPI-M Politburo

92AS0098B Calcutta *THE TELEGRAPH* in English
14 Sep 91 p 4

[Text] New Delhi, 13 Sep—The CPI(M) today underlined its sharp differences with the CPI over the assessment of developments in the Soviet Union but stated that these differences should not come in the way of strengthening Left unity. Responding to the statement made by the CPI general secretary, Mr. Indrajit Gupta, yesterday, the CPI(M) politburo emphasised that there were basic theoretical and ideological differences with the CPI. While upholding the cause of "Left unity," the politburo appeared to reject the possibility of programmatic unity leading to a united Communist Party.

The politburo said the statement of Mr. Gupta "underlines the divergent assessment of the two parties of the disturbing developments in the Soviet Union." Elaborating, it said, "The CPI(M)'s stand on the recent events in the Soviet Union is motivated by deep concern and commitment in the defence of socialism in the Soviet Union. The blatant moves to restore capitalism by dismantling the socialist system and the steps being taken to disintegrate the USSR should arouse anger and opposition of all Communists and progressives."

It added, "The recent visit by Mr. James Baker, U.S. secretary of state, and his arrogant dictates on the internal and foreign policy measures to be taken by the Soviet leadership have been met with submissive compliance."

In a direct rebuttal of Mr. Gupta's advice that epithets such as "anti-Marxist" or "anti-Communist" should not be hurled at Soviet leaders, the CPI(M) said, "No Communist party can ignore the counter-revolutionary developments in the Soviet Union and the role being played by the present leadership there. The CPI(M) since its inception has never been silent when the question has been imperialism versus socialism, or when the future of socialism is threatened."

It, however, stated, "Such differences on basic theoretical and ideological questions have not and should not prevent the two parties and the Left forces to work together and strengthen Left unity in facing the challengers before the Left and democratic movement in the country. What is happening in the Soviet Union only further underlines the necessity for all anti-imperialist and Left forces to further develop and strengthen the struggles to defend national unity, safeguard independence and for social emancipation."

CPI-M Official Scores Gorbachev, CPI

92AS0153A Madras *INDIAN EXPRESS* in English
23 Sep 91 p 15

[Text] New Delhi, 22 Sep (Express News Service)—The emerging political scene in Soviet Union has emboldened the CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] leadership to ridicule those who have been severely critical of its position, particularly certain sections of "progressive

intellectuals." The obvious reference is to the CPI [Communist Party of India] leadership and its camp followers. The epithet the CPI-M has reserved for them is "Indian Gorbachevists."

In a reiteration of its position against Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and the changes he has ushered in that country, CPI-M central secretariat member Prakash Karat says that if the plan he had set for the Soviet Union had gone on unhindered by the abortive "emergency take over" on 19 August, Mr. Gorbachev would have ended up representing "nobody but himself." Mr. Prakash says in an article in the CPI-M organ, *PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY*, that that would have been the effect of the Union treaty which was scheduled to be signed on 20 August.

Mr. Prakash describes the total impression sought to be created by "progressive intellectuals and left circles" through their interpretations, as a "web of fantasy." Their script of the Soviet scenario may be good for "story books" but it will not be good as history, based on facts. He has presented four "facts" for the benefit of his party's detractors and Mr. Gorbachev's acolytes.

Fact No. 1, according to Mr. Prakash, is that Mr. Gorbachev was determined to convert the CPSU into a social democratic party. Secondly, Mr. Gorbachev had, by July 1991, ceased to command the support a big section of the CPSU. Thirdly, the men who led the emergency takeover on 19 August were not the creatures and 'Yes-men' of Mr. Gorbachev; they were "authoritative and elected leaders of the CPSU." Fourthly, the CPI-M leader asserts, Mr. Gorbachev, as the general secretary of the CPSU and as the Soviet President, exercised his powers "illegally" to disband his own party and suspend its functioning.

These are points made clearly for the consumption of CPI leaders who have rallied behind Mr. Gorbachev and hailed the developments in Soviet Union as restoration of democracy. The CPI-M leadership says that the least that should be expected of those who have illusions about Mr. Gorbachev's Marxist credentials is a disavowal of the "authoritarian steps taken by him against his own party."

CPI Discusses Soviet Developments

92AS0097A Madras *THE HINDU* in English
4 Oct 91 p 9

[Text] New Delhi, 3 Oct—Stunned like all communist parties throughout the world by the sheer pace and quality of developments in the Soviet Union, the CPI [Communist Party of India] has decided on an intensive debate within the party at all levels. The debate will be concluded at the 15th party congress to be held in March-April next.

Meeting here on 29 and 30 September, the CPI central executive committee prepared a base document for discussion on the developments in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe. This really is an extension of the discussion initiated within party ranks two years ago on eastern Europe and on the concepts of *perestroika* and *glasnost*.

Conducted through party journals, the inner debate elicited enthusiastic response from the cadre.

The debate, of course, takes on another meaning altogether after the Soviet collapse. For a start, like other communist parties, the CPI too would have to see to what extent the party holds organisationally at the present juncture. In this context the view the party takes, even in the initial phase of the debate, will necessarily be relevant to the outcome.

Among the lessons to be drawn from the current events in the Soviet Union, the CPI has noted that there can be no single model for building socialism, and that "the guiding role of the Party is to be built through activities of the Party." The party has also observed that the failure of a particular model of socialism does not mean that socialism has failed. The CPI notes, the document prepared the central executive committee, "remains adhered to Marxism-Leninism, not only as a tool to study Indian and world situation, but also as a guide to action."

The document has dug out a formulation adopted by the undivided CPI in 1958 at its fifth Congress at Amritsar. It has recalled, that "The then undivided CPI accepted political pluralism to be a basic feature of India and also gave up the postulate of the dictatorship of the proletariat."

The Amritsar Congress was held against the backdrop of the 20th Congress of the CPSU (1956) held after the demise of Stalin and had denounced the cult of personality (assiduously built by Stalin), and raised the possibility of detente and economic cooperation between countries with divergent socio-political-economic systems.

Point of Contention

In practice, the abandoning of the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat remained on paper in the CPSU as well as in the mainstream trends of communist thought and practice in India. Indeed, the 20th CPSU Congress view was to become one of the principal points of contention between the CPI and the CPI(M) [Communist Party of India-Marxist] which was formed in 1964 after a split in the original Party. The CPI, after the split continued to reaffirm the formulations of the watershed 20th CPSU Congress, while the CPI(M) denounced it as revisionist, as did, for that matter, the Maoists.

The formulations contained in the document are a sharp indictment of the "command and administrative method (which) became the operational mechanism of socialism which had undemocratic and bureaucratic features." Consequently, "The economy was stagnating and society was in ferment, demanding expansion of democracy. The model of socio-economic development in these countries had not only exhausted its potential, but also proved to be a lag in further advance of socialism."

From this it is a natural step forward to denounce the August coup in the Soviet Union. The coup, it is suggested, struck at the heart of the reforms visualised by the 28th CPSU Congress held last year which "set forth the aim of replacing the old model."

The CPI document records candidly, "The efforts were on to create a democratic, law-governed society to absorb the full benefits of the scientific-technological revolution. This also meant the introduction of multi-form property relations and decentralised and modern form of management. In place of the command mechanism, the economy should be allowed to function on economic parameters, satisfying the laws of demand and supply and that of value."

Gorbachev Criticised

The document takes note of the "failure" of the CPSU, but also criticises the subsequent actions of the Soviet President, Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev, of virtually disbanding the party which he led as general secretary, as running against "communist ethics."

Commentary Views Political Uncertainty, Flux

92AS0065D Secunderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE
in English 19 Sep 91 p 8

[Text] Two veteran politicians shared their thoughts on the current political situation with different audiences in the capital on Monday. In cold print, the gist of their speeches read pedestrian and familiar, but each of them, in his own way, went to the roots of the ills plaguing the national policy today. The Prime Minister, Mr Narasimha Rao, spoke at the meeting of the General Body of the Congress(I) Parliamentary Party, the former Prime Minister, Mr Chandra Shekhar, delivered the Des Raj Chaudhury Memorial Annual lecture. Although the two of them spoke in different contexts and to different audiences, there was some basic similarity in at least a part of their assessment of the national scene.

Mr Narasimha Rao's speech was remarkable for its candor and forthrightness. Mr Rao is generally given to soft-pedalling and tries to be both inoffensive and pleasant. But on Monday, he persuaded himself to admonish Congressmen and highlight some of their failures almost in the same manner in which Rajiv Gandhi did during his famous "power brokers and influence peddlars" speech at the Bombay 1985 Congress Centenary celebrations. Mr Rao said that Congressmen had lost touch with the people, and it was largely because of their neglect of and indifference to the masses that the naxalites had gained the upper hand. Even more significantly, Mr Rao highlighted the moral responsibility on the part of Congressmen to safeguard the interests of the people who had voted the Congress to power in some States and at the Center. Referring to the phenomenon of dissidence in the Congress-ruled States, the Prime Minister posed the question: "should we let down the people who had rehabilitated the Congress and brought it back to power?"

It seems too much to hope that congressmen will read between the lines and comprehend the significance of Mr Rao's remarks just as it seems too much for Mr Rao to

hope that such plaintalk will cure the party of its ills or even that it will make the congressmen sit and do some heart-searching. Under the circumstances, it will not be surprising if few congressmen follow Mr Rao's directive to them to go to their constituencies after the end of Parliament session, renew their contacts with the people and try to attend to their problems.

Mr Chandra Shekhar too dwelt indirectly on the theme of the state of alienation between the leaders and the people. He referred to the sacrifices made by the people during the freedom struggle in response to the call given by leaders. The people considered it a moral responsibility to fulfil their obligations towards their motherland. This could be possible, he said, only due to the firm faith in the leadership which inspired a sense of conviction and self-confidence. To inspire the masses it was essential to assure the people that their sacrifices and hard work would contribute towards a better future for their children and not for the ostentatious living of a chosen few. Developing this theme further, Mr Chandra Shekhar said that policy choices in India have to be made by pooling all intellectual, political and social capabilities within the country. This required a conviction that Indians had the capacity to resolve their own problems, however serious these may be. After stating this, Mr Chandra Shekhar echoed Mr Narasimha Rao's view that no national crises or problems can be solved without mass mobilization.

Mr Narasimha Rao was not far wrong in identifying the reason for the upsurge in the extremist movements in the country. Whether it is naxalism in the south or the secessionist terrorism in the north, the basic inspiration for them comes from the alienation of the mainstream national parties from the masses. The success of extremism corresponds to the failure of national political parties in giving confidence to the masses. How different was the situation four decades ago? According to Mr Chandra Shekhar, the basic strength of the national independence movement was in its success in getting the enlightened cooperation of masses. The movement could generate hope and confidence among people for a better future.

Clearly, what both Mr Rao and Mr Chandra Shekhar meant was that leaders have got completely alienated from the people, with the result that they are no more in a position to infuse confidence among them and give them hope for the future. This is an assessment shared by a number of other leaders in our public life today, but unfortunately none of them seem to have the will or strength to do something to reverse the trends of despair and cynicism that have become all pervasive today. This was fully reflected in a terse comment which Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee made in the Lok Sabha on Monday, while bemoaning the tragic developments in Assam and elsewhere. After 33 years of parliamentary life, the country had come to such a pass where there were no easy solutions to any of the problems. The coming generations will not forgive us, he said in anguish. It is noteworthy that both Mr Chandra Shekhar and Mr Vajpayee attributed the "serious accumulated problems" to the policies pursued, obviously by the Congress, in the last four decades.

The note of despair in the utterances of the senior leaders reflects the general political mood in the capital these days. One would have thought that after an agonizing phase of electioneering, there would be a semblance of cohesion in the policy after the establishment of a government at the Center. Unfortunately, whether it is in the ruling Congress(I) or in all the opposition parties singly and collectively, the mood is highly pessimistic as if no one is sure of what the morrow will bring. On the one hand, Mr Narasimha Rao speaks confidently of the success of his consensus approach to national problems. On the other, not a day passes when one does not hear opposition leaders bemoaning that the government does not take them into confidence on any issue. Between Mr Rao's claim and the opposition's grievance, one does not know where the truth lies. The cancellation of elections in Punjab and the deployment of the army in Assam are the two latest instances cited by the opposition in support of their contention that the Narasimha Rao government does not believe in consensus.

The Prime Minister is quite right in declaring that a consensus approach is no more a matter of necessity but one of conviction. Given the minority character of his government, Mr Rao may perhaps have no choice other than to keep the opposition in good humor, but in a larger sense, he has realized that even if the government has a majority, a confrontationist course would be counter-productive. Here again, there is some similarity in the attitudes of Mr Chandra Shekhar and Mr Vajpayee, both of whom have been arguing in favor of the promotion of a spirit of reconciliation and understanding. Unfortunately, Mr Chandra Shekhar has no party to back him, and Mr Vajpayee seems to represent the moderates in the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party], whose number is declining.

A certain measure of confrontation is inevitable within Parliament, and the budget session also witnessed the usual quantum of heat and din and walk-outs etc. However, as the session is ending, there are enough indications of the revival of the campaigns which have a potential of aggravating tensions during the coming inter-session period. The VHP [Vishwa Hindu Parishad] is again on the warpath, and one can confidently expect an added stridency in its campaign for the construction of the Ayodhya temple. Along with the temple controversy, signs are not wanting that Mr V.P. Singh is also preparing to revive the agitation for the implementation of the Mandal formula. The recent spate of atrocities against Dalits has provided the impetus which the Janata Dal needed to revive the Mandal campaign. Recent utterances of Mr V.P. Singh and his top aide, Mr Ram Vilas Paswan have contained veiled threats of extending the campaign to those regions and States where the popular response to the Janata Dal was muted in the 1991 elections.

The Congress(I) itself is unsure of itself, and its members make no secret of their discomfort in the new environment in which Mr Narasimha Rao's durability as Prime Minister is seen as very uncertain. The suspense created by the "Sonia factor" is the primary cause for this discomfort, and it seems these days that all sections of the party,

regardless of group loyalties, seem most anxious to know one way or the other whether Sonia Gandhi will enter politics or not. To some extent the "Sonia factor" seems to be inhibiting the Janata Dal as well. There are sections within the Janata Dal which hope that a serious process of political realignment and adjustments will become possible and those who have unfurled the banner of revolt against Mr V.P. Singh, may find it easier to forge understanding with the Congress when the irksome "Sonia factor" is out of the way. Similarly, the BJP too will be all too anxious to know Sonia's decision one way or the other. Having sponsored a private Bill in Parliament opposing the assumption of any high office by any "foreign-born" person, the BJP can be expected to seek political mileage for itself in case Sonia Gandhi does opt for a political career.

Thus, broadly speaking, politics seems to be in a state of flux, with everyone uncertain, confused and feeling helpless. For the time being, however, the prospects of the introduction of an element of clarity seem remote.

Karunaidhi Announces 'Dravidian Renaissance Forum'

92AS0065B Secunderabad *DECCAN CHRONICLE* in English 16 Sep 91 p 9

[Text] Madras, Sept. 15 (PTI). The DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] president, Mr M. Karunaidhi, on Sunday announced the formation of the 'Dravidian Renaissance Forum'—an organization for educating the people of Tamil Nadu on the Dravidian movement, its history, glory and contribution to the cause of social justice.

Making his first public speech after the DMK's defeat in the June general elections, he said the forum, which would function from Tuesday, would start a correspondence education institute. The movement's history, including that of the Justice Party, Dravida Kazhagam, DMK, and the self-respect campaign and the ideas of state autonomy and federalism, would form the syllabus for the course, he said.

He was speaking at the party headquarters here after releasing a book 'history of the Dravidian movement' authored by former Union Minister, Mr Murasoli Maran, MP [member of Parliament].

Today is the first day of the DMK's three-day 'Mupperum Vizha' (triple festival) to mark the birth anniversaries of the late leaders, Periyar E.V. Ramasamy and C.N. Annadurai, and the party's founding.

Mr Karunaidhi said the party's current aim was not to organize agitations or campaign against the continuance of the AIADMK [All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] Government in Tamil Nadu, but to expose the 'group' in power. He clarified that his statement should not be misconstrued to mean that another anti-Brahmin movement would be launched.

He named Mr Maran as the correspondence institute's secretary and Prof M. Nannan as principal. An advisory committee of senior partyman would be formed to guide its functioning, he said.

Earlier, felicitating Mr Maran, speakers including the DMK general secretary, Mr K. Anbazhagan, praised him for releasing the book at a time when it was needed most—that is, when the party was not in power.

Mr Maran, in his welcome address, launched a blistering attack on the 'forces of domination' which were back in power in the State. He hoped the book would kindle ethnic consciousness among the youth.

Byelections Announced for 15 Nov

Details Given

92AS0105A Madras *THE HINDU* in English
4 Oct 91 p 1

[Text] New Delhi, 3 Oct—Byelections or countermanded elections to fill vacancies in 16 Lok Sabha and 58 Assembly constituencies spread over 15 States and the Union Territory of Delhi will take place on 15 November, the Election Commission announced here today. The last date for filing nominations varies from 17 to 21 October in different States as the Commission has to consider the gazetted State holidays.

The formal notifications will be issued on 10 October by the President or the respective Governors in the case of countermanded polls and by the Election Commission in the case of by-elections caused by resignations or deaths of candidates after the last elections.

Besides 13 Lok Sabha seats vacant in Punjab and six in Jammu and Kashmir—the two States where no decision has yet been taken on holding elections—there were 19 Lok Sabha constituencies where elections were due. The Commission has decided to hold elections in all of these, but three constituencies where cases are pending in courts. The three where elections will not be held are Patna and Purnea in Bihar and Meerut in Uttar Pradesh [U.P.].

These elections are expected to generate a keen political contest, given the minority character of the Congress(I) Government at the Centre and the fact that the Prime Minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, and the Defence Minister Mr. Sharad Pawar, will be contestants. The fight for the Amethi seat will be significant if Mrs. Sonia Gandhi decides to contest from there. The former Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav, will again attract attention as the star candidate in Etawah where polls were countermanded at the last round. Since the elections will be spread almost throughout the country, they are certain to assume the character of a mini general election and may decide the future of the minority government at the Centre.

BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] To Put Up Tough Fight

The BJP leader, Mr. L.K. Advani, has announced that his party will 'fight to win' the Nandyal seat in Andhra Pradesh from where the Prime Minister is to contest, Baramati in Maharashtra from where Mr. Pawar is expected to be the Congress(I) candidate and Amethi in Uttar Pradesh, citadel of the former Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi. The BJP is expected to finalise its list of candidates by 13 October.

The last date for filing nominations is 18 October for Cuddapah and Nandyal (Andhra Pradesh), Vidisha (Madhya Pradesh), Nanded and Baramati (Maharashtra), Lutch (Gujarat), and New Delhi Lok Sabha seats and the 15 assemblies going to the polls in these four States. For Barh, Madhepur and Gaya (Bihar), Dharwad South (Karnataka), Amethi, Etawah and Bulandshahr (Uttar Pradesh), and Purulia (West Bengal) Lok Sabha seats and for 34 Assembly constituencies in these States and Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Kerala the last date for nominations is 19 October. For the Dhankanal Lok Sabha constituency and three Assembly seats in Orissa the final day for nominations is 21 October, while for the six Assembly seats in Manipur and Rajasthan, candidates will have to file in their nominations by 17 October.

In 10 of the 16 Lok Sabha constituencies which will go to the polls on 15 November the elections had been countermanded as a result of poll violence or deaths of candidates before the start of polls. In the other six, vacancies have arisen because of the death of Rajiv Gandhi (Amethi), resignations of seats by Mr. A.B. Vajpayee and Mr. L.K. Advani (Vidisha and New Delhi) who retained the other seats won by them, resignations by sitting members from Nandyal and Baramati to make way for Mr. Narasimha Rao and Mr. Sharad Pawar, and the death of the Forward Bloc MP from Purulia.

The major electoral battle in these by-elections will be fought in the Hindi belt of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh where polls are to be held for seven Lok Sabha seats, three each in Bihar and U.P. and one in Madhya Pradesh. As many as 34 of the total of 58 Assembly constituencies which will be going to the polls on 15 November are also in these three states—17 in Uttar Pradesh, 12 in Bihar and five in Madhya Pradesh.

Narasimha Rao Plans

92AS0105B Calcutta *THE TELEGRAPH* in English
18 Sep 91 p 1

[Article by Yubaraj Ghimire: "Narasimha Rao To Stand From Nandiyl in AP Andhra Pradesh"]

[Text] New Delhi, 17 Sep—The Prime Minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, will be seeking election to the Lok Sabha from Nandiyl in Andhra Pradesh [AP].

According to party sources, the Congress(I) member, Mr. Pratap Reddy, has offered to vacate the seat for him. Mr. Rao has almost made up his mind to return to his home state seven years after his defeat following a political deal with the Telugu Desam leader, Mr. N.T. Rama Rao.

Mr. Rama Rao whose party would be supporting the Prime Minister in the by-election has been assured insurance compensation for his Ramakrishna Studio, which was damaged in a fire few months ago, though he did not have legitimate claims, sources added.

The present deal made the Prime Minister's victory a certainty as the only potential opponent would be the People's War Group (PWG) if it decided to contest the elections. So far the Naxalite outfit has been boycotting elections in the state.

Mr. Rao, who had lost elections, to the Lok Sabha in 1984 from his home state in 1984, was later given a ticket from Ramtek in Maharashtra in a by-election which he won. He retained the Ramtek seat in 1989 but did not contest the 1991 election on health grounds.

The defence minister, Mr. Sharad Pawar, would contest from his Barsat constituency in Maharashtra. The present member from Barsat is his nephew and he is said to be willing to vacate his seat.

The finance minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, would be the Congress(I) candidate to the Rajya Sabha during a by-election in October from the state.

All the three senior ministers have to obtain membership of either House of Parliament by 20 December as otherwise they lose their official posts.

Mrs. Sonia Gandhi has not yet indicated her intentions on contesting the Amethi seat which fell vacant after the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi.

Center-State Relationship Viewed

92AS0065J Bangalore *DECCAN HERALD* in English
30 Sep 91 p 8

[Text] The sub-committee set up by the Inter-State Council to consider the recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission's report on Center-State relations did well to accept several of them in principle. The most significant was the one that requires the States to be consulted, individually and collectively, before any Union legislation on concurrent subjects is undertaken. Curiously, the original justification for a concurrent power was that it would secure uniformity in legal principles throughout the country and keep centrifugal forces, including those clamoring for greater rights for the States, in check. The Constitution-framers had also prescribed that a law made by Parliament on a concurrent subject would prevail in the event of conflict with the relevant State law. If followed up in a spirit of genuine accommodation, the change of mood reflected at the New Delhi meeting could result in concrete legislation. It marks as much a recognition of the emergence of powerful regional forces as an attempt by the Center to extend its new-found consensual approach to legislation. The Center's reasoned approach will hopefully encourage the States to react with corresponding maturity

and not tempt them into biting off more than they can chew. For instance, the scrapping of Article 356 (dealing with the breakdown of the constitutional machinery in a State and the supersession of its government by the Center) which has already been mooted in certain quarters might still be premature when the specters of terrorism and communalism haunt many parts of the country. Education could also continue in the Concurrent List to ensure that a certain consistency in national outlook is maintained. The change of thinking that can be discerned in New Delhi indicates that the States will be encouraged to assume grater responsibilities, if they want them, though their search for larger sources of revenue is likely to grow more pronounced. It was agreed at the sub-committee's meeting that the grievances of the State governments on Union taxation of their commercial undertakings would be heard by the Center. As a consequence, the possibility of the Center endorsing the Sarkaria Commission's recommendation on framing comprehensive legislation on the subject does not appear far-fetched any longer. New Delhi has also agreed to discuss its residual powers and entertain complaints by the states on over-centralization. It would be too much to expect the long chapter of control exercised by New Delhi to be closed abruptly. But the Narasimha Rao Government's initiative marks a welcome step in the interests of greater federal harmony and in conformity with the political and structural changes that have been taking place.

Karnataka Accommodating on Cauvery, Seeks Reciprocation

92AS0065G Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English
28 Sep 91 p 8

[Text] Karnataka's decision to delete the word "court" from the Bill to replace the Karnataka Cauvery Basin Irrigation (Protection) Ordinance 1991, was timely. Chief Justice Ranganatha Mishra, who heads the five-judge Constitution Bench hearing the presidential reference on the Cauvery dispute, had earlier expressed his resentment over the manner in which Section 4 of the Ordinance (and subsequently the Bill) had specified that the (Karnataka) Government could draw the amount of water it required from the Cauvery without being subject to any court or tribunal order. Karnataka's move confirms that it will abide by the apex court's decision. It is now for Tamil Nadu, which had earlier criticized the presidential reference to the Supreme Court, to follow suit. What makes Karnataka's action particularly praiseworthy is that it was taken even while the ruling party was strongly divided over shelving the controversial ordinance.

The Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha had gone to great lengths to explain in an application before the Supreme Court that if the State released the 205 thousand million cubic (TMC) feet of water to Tamil Nadu as directed by the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal it would not be able to cultivate the 11.2 lakh acres it was entitled to. It has also been pointed out that the 1892 and 1924 agreements between Mysore State and Madras Presidency were discriminatory to present-day Karnataka and had been

treated as such in the May 1972 tripartite conference between Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala, despite which the Tribunal had relied on their terms. A study conducted by a retired Karnataka chief engineer has also painted a dismal picture of the State being left with just 122 (TMC) feet of water in a particularly bad monsoon year against the requirement of 312 TMC feet if it implemented the Tribunal's interim order. Notwithstanding such grim possibilities, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu need to follow the apex court's advice and seek a compromise. The Karnataka Government has therefore, displayed considerable political will in making a unilateral gesture even while certain sections of public opinion in the State appear to be bent on a collision course with Tamil Nadu. If Tamil Nadu's political leadership can reciprocate Karnataka's gesture and display greater accommodation, not only will the two States move closer to a solution, they could begin the long-delayed exercise of examining ways in which the river water can be exploited to greater mutual advantage. It will also demonstrate the ability of political leaderships to lead rather than be led by volatile parochial moods.

Editorial Criticizes Inaccurate Press Reporting

92AS0065H Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English
28 Sep 91 p 8

[Text] Some recent rulings of the Press Council of India must be studied seriously by a press alert to the need for disseminating information with due regard to truth and responsibility. One is the censure of four Hindi newspapers for publishing exaggerated reports on the violence in Ayodhya last year at the time of the kar seva. There is little to add to the Council's ruling that the four newspapers had lost their balance during that period. They had put our fanciful figures of 1,000 deaths in police firing at the time. It is worth remarking, in view of the nationwide consequences of the events in question, that the press as a whole was not free of sensationalizing the kar seva and presenting a subtly slanted view of it. Several important English dailies in the country, for instance, adopted the term "temple" for what was usually called "the disputed structure" (and is, in fact a mosque which one side claims to have been built on the ruins of a destroyed temple). This led to the absurdity of one newspaper headline describing the assault on the structure as an attempt to demolish the temple. Apparently correspondents for national newspapers of repute had adopted the vocabulary, if not the thinking, of the protagonists who claimed that they were in fact only "rebuilding" a "temple".

In another case, the reporting of the investigations into the murder of two nuns last November in Jogeshwari in Bombay, the Council has ruled that four Bombay newspapers erred in publishing what were thought to be post-mortem findings that the nuns were not virgins. It is relevant that the reported findings, which were based on information or interpretation made available to the newspapers from forensic sources, were not borne out in the actual post-mortem reports. Although the Council has not doubted the good faith of the newspapers in disseminating what it was given to believe, it has rightly cautioned

against the publication of such reports which infringe the privacy of individuals—even dead individuals—and neither seem necessary in the public interest nor assist the pursuit of justice.

PTI Interviews Planning Commission's Mukherjee

92AS0154A Calcutta *THE STATESMAN* in English
23 Sep 91 p 1

[Text] New Delhi, 22 Sep—An alternative contingency plan will be made for raising public sector investment in areas where private sector participation is not up to the expected levels during the Eighth Plan (1992-97), the Planning Commission Deputy Chairman, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, said today, reports PTI.

In an interview, he said the commission would wait for the two or three-year transitional period for the host of policy changes in the economy to fructify before it could draw up alternative plans for raising public sector investment.

He said right now they could not exactly say how much the private sector would come into the areas vacated by the decisions of the new Government, especially in sectors like power generation and steel.

The first full meeting of the reconstituted commission last week approved a total outlay of Rs[rupees]7,92,000 crores for the Eighth Plan. Of this, Rs 3,42,000 crores will be public sector investment and Rs 1,48,000 crores private sector investment. The household sector accounts for Rs 1,48,000 crores.

The public sector investment, at about 43 percent of the overall outlay, is two percent less than what was decided for the Seventh Plan.

Asked about the cut-down in the public sector investment, Mr. Mukherjee said it was a consequence of the recent decisions taken as part of the structural reforms of the economy.

Social Sectors

The Deputy Chairman said with the delicensing of seven items in a list of 17 reserved areas, the public sector could now shift its investment to social sectors.

"In fact, the Government is enlarging its responsibilities in the social sectors when it withdraws from the infrastructure sector, where it expects more private sector investment," he said.

He said for economic development the new plan would give priority to energy, transport and communications in the area of economic development and for employment generation, population control, literacy, health and rural electrification in the area of human development.

Mr. Mukherjee said in the area of agricultural development, irrigation, export promotion of agricultural products and diversification of agriculture to horticulture and pisciculture would be given priority.

Mr. Mukherjee said anti-poverty programmes would continue to play a significant role in the next Plan, and added that employment generation would be the tool by which poverty alleviation would be achieved.

He said the National Development Council [NDC] would meet sometime in early November for adopting the new "directional paper" prepared by the Planning Commission, setting a target of 5.6 percent growth rate.

The paper would be presented to the Union Cabinet sometime next week, with the changes suggested at the first full meeting of the commission included in the paper.

Mr. Mukherjee said once the NDC approved the directional paper, the commission would take about four months to prepare the document to put the Plan in operation by April 1992.

States' Plans

The commission would also begin a simultaneous exercise of discussions with the States on their annual plans for 1992-93 from December next.

On mega projects, Mr. Mukherjee said the Commission would have no objection if the capital market could absorb them. "Of course, the Government cannot allow speculation in the market forces," he added.

He also said that once the Eighth Plan was finalized, the commission would not agree to consider inclusion of any projects later. "No change will be allowed in midstream."

On the need to cut down on non-Plan expenditure, he said steps would [be] taken to ensure that the resources meant for development could not be diverted for non-development.

Parliament Approves 1991-92 Budget

92AS0119B Secunderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE
in English 19 Sep 91 p 9

[Text] New Delhi, 18 September (PTI)—Parliament on Wednesday approved the 1991-92 budget with the Rajya Sabha returning the Finance Bill and the Finance Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh assuring the House that the process of “disinflation,” would set in by mid-October.

The House also returned the Voluntary Deposits Immunities and Exemptions Bill providing immunity to deposits made to the National Housing Scheme to be launched by the government in an effort to tap black money for developmental purposes.

Winding up the two day debate on the Finance Bill, Dr. Singh said the tight fiscal and monetary controls needed to be pursued vigorously in the next two or three years to overcome the grave economic crisis.

Seeking the cooperation of political parties in this regard, Dr. Singh urged that the new economic measures outlined in the budget be given a “fair trial.”

Agreeing on the need for a rationalised tax structure, Dr. Singh said he would be able to spell out some measures in this regard in the next budget to be presented in February.

Members wanted the government to raise the income tax exemption limit and reduction in the rate of income tax at the highest brackets and curbing of black money and measures to check spiralling prices.

Dr. Singh said the country expected a good crop and this would help in the process of disinflation.

He said the budget was prepared in July when normally prices exert a pressure on the economy. And that was the time the government brought about adjustments in exchange rate of the Rupee.

He said the government through fiscal measures hoped to keep the fiscal deficit at 6.5 percent of the GDP [gross domestic product] this year and bring it down to five percent next year.

Dr. Singh, however, said the fiscal consolidation was essential prerequisite for achieving the objectives of the planned economy and sought the cooperation of all political parties to ensure strong fiscal system at the Centre.

He said the government had launched the process of massive transformation of the economy and if this was to succeed, there had to be cooperation from all quarters.

Responding to the demand for more concessions, Dr. Singh urged the members to “give a fair trial” to the measures, if pursued vigorously would make the economy more “resilient and vibrant.”

Regarding measures to curb black money, Dr. Singh said unless the government brought about reforms in the structure, which was the root of the menace, this problem could not be tackled.

Indigenous Parallel Processing Computer on Market

92AS0157A Madras THE HINDU in English
3 Oct 91 p 7

[Text] New Delhi, 2 Oct—The first indigenous parallel processing computer, “Param,” is now commercially available. Three firms have acquired the hardware technology while a fourth has tied up to do the system engineering and marketing, C-DAC announced today, in a presentation at the annual convention of the Computer Society of India (CSI).

The machine itself was put on display by Tata Unysis who are presently offering upgradeable configurations from 4 to 32 nodes, based on the C-DAC technology.

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) also unveiled for the first time their PACE parallel processing computer at the CSI convention. The machine presently available in a 16 node version will be expanded by the DRDO lab “ANURAG” to 128 nodes by the end of 1992. The machine is being commercially offered by the public sector ECIL [Electronic Corporation of India Ltd.] .

Shrunken Size

This year's CSI exhibition, normally the showcase for the entire indigenous computer industry, found a dozen major hardware manufacturers absent. The financial crunch and lack of any significant new items were generally offered as the reasons for the shrunken size of what was always touted as the subcontinent's premier computer bazaar.

However this has had the salutary effect of focussing attention on the efforts of government agencies such as CDAC, DRDO, CMC [expansion not given] and Engineers India on one hand and a host of up and coming software firms on the other. Dr. Dewang Mehta, Executive Director of NASSCOM—the national association of software companies—speaking to THE HINDU said this was an inevitable development. “Software is our forte and the days of “screwdriver” technology are clearly over,” he said.

Other presentations in the convention today focussed on development-oriented applications of Information Technology in India. One district in each of seven States have been identified by the Ministry of Rural Development for the total computerisation of land records. The GIST plug in card developed by CDAC has permitted these records to be generated in any Indian language.

In a presentation today, Brigadier R.K. Bagga of DRDO reviewed the computer scenario in hitech warfare with special reference to the Gulf War. The chip now rules battlefield command and control, he said, and suggested that “our own proven software expertise could be used to enhance and improve existing weapon systems.”

The four-day convention attended by over 2000 delegates concluded here today. Next year's event is to be held in Madras.

Export-Generated Growth Initiatives

New Credit Policy Measures

92AS0056 *Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA* in English
4 Sep 91 p 17

[Text] **Bombay, 3 September:** In a bid to hasten India's march towards "export-led growth," the Reserve Bank governor, Mr. S. Venkitaramanan, announced a liberalisation of the export refinance formula here today.

The RBI's [Reserve Bank of India] latest credit policy measures, which become effective from tomorrow, have been communicated to scheduled commercial banks today. The new package is hoped to give a boost to the export initiative by providing greater incentive to banks to finance exports and by increasing banks' access to export credit refinance.

As per the new policy, banks will be provided export credit refinance to the extent of 60 percent of the increase in export credit over the monthly-average level of 1988-89 up to the monthly average level of 1989-90 against 50 percent hitherto.

In addition, banks will continue to be provided 100 percent of the increase over the monthly average level of export credit in 1989-90, says an RBI spokesman.

The new policy also included tightening of selective credit controls. An RBI release states that "on a review of recent price output developments relating to paddy/rice, wheat and "other food-grains," new measures are being introduced.

Minimum margins on bank advances against paddy-rice and "other foodgrains" has been increased by 15 percentage points. The new minimum margins will now be 60 percent for mills processing units and against warehouse receipts and 75 percent for "others."

It has also been decided that advances against wheat including flour mills, which had been hitherto exempt from selective credit control provisions be brought back under their control, says the release.

The minimum margins on advances against stocks of wheat will be 30 percent in the case of mills/processing units, 45 percent in the case of "others" and 30 percent in the case of advances against warehouse receipts.

The level of credit ceiling on advances against wheat will be 100 percent of the peak level of credit maintained by a party in any of the three years (November-October) 1987-88, 1988-89 and 1989-90, according to the release.

Tax Concessions Announced

92AS0056B *Madras THE HINDU* in English
12 Sep 91 p 1

[Excerpts] **New Delhi, 11 September:** The Union Finance Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, today announced a

number of concessions pertaining to both direct and indirect taxes based on the numerous representations received by him in response to his budget proposals for 1991-92. The concessions are mainly aimed at the exporting community, the travel trade, financial institutions, banks and small taxpayers. The Minister, however, did not concede the demand to raise the income-tax exemption limit.

In the case of indirect taxes, the industries which have received the attention of the Finance Minister include the film industry, certain agro-based products, pharmaceuticals, black and white TV sets and the plastic container industry. The concessions were announced late in the evening by Dr. Singh while moving the Finance Bill, 1991, for consideration of the Lok Sabha. A lengthy debate extending over eight to twelve hours is expected to follow before the Bill is passed by the House.

The Minister's first concession has been addressed to the exporting community which has now been allowed further benefits. As per the proposal, profits from the sale of Exim scrips and receipts by way of duty drawback or payments under the International Price Reimbursement Scheme (IPRS) will also be treated as export profits eligible for consideration under Section 80HHC of the Income-tax Act.

Similarly, the Minister has acknowledged the contribution made by the tour operators in attracting foreign tourists and has proposed an amendment to ensure that their receipts in foreign exchange, eligible for computing the concession, do not get reduced by the payments made to another hotel, tour operator etc. for providing service to foreign tourists.

Provision To Be Enlarged

Dr. Singh had proposed in his budget that the tax concessions available to Indian companies in relation to receipts of royalty, commission, fees and similar payments from a foreign source for export of technical knowhow or rendering services outside India is to be extended to non-corporate resident taxpayers. This provision is now to be further enlarged and made available to technical or professional services rendered from India to concerns abroad. This will, however, not apply to technical or professional services rendered to the non-residents in India.

The Minister has modified his proposal for imposition of expenditure tax on restaurants providing superior services. Dropping the earlier multiple criteria, he has now stipulated only one criteria for identification which will be that the restaurant is air-conditioned. Dr. Singh also proposed a clarificatory amendment to Section 32 of the I-T Act relating to deduction for depreciation in computing business profits for tax purposes. Under the proposed amendment, no depreciation will be allowed in respect of any plant and machinery the cost of which gets amortised, in one or more years, under any other provision of the I-T Act.

As for indirect taxes, he has proposed some concessions for the film industry by reducing the basic and auxiliary duties

of Customs on colour "jumbo" films from 90 percent to 55 percent. The estimated revenue loss on this score is Rs.[rupees]20 crores. Also, the excise duty exemption granted to a number of agro-based products such as sauce, butter, cheese, etc. has been extended to fruit pulp based beverages, soups, broth and powders of fruits and vegetables, leading to a revenue loss of Rs. 9 crores.

The other concessions pertain to the pharmaceutical industry, the plastic container industry and soaps, black and white TV sets, plaster of gypsum and sub-components, components and machinery used for the manufacture of fuel injection equipment.

Current Harvest Down, Spring Target Raised

92AS0093A *Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English*
21 Sep 91 p 17

[Text] New Delhi, 20 Sep (The Times of India News Service)—The agricultural production target for the ensuing rabi season has been stepped up perceptibly in a bid to make up for the shortfall in the current kharif output due to erratic monsoon rainfall in some parts of the country.

The new target, finalised after consultations with states at the two-day national conference on agriculture, has been fixed at 82.7 million tonnes, against the last rabi's actual production of around 76 million tonnes. This is about a million tonnes more than the working target of 82.7 million tonnes finalised in the beginning of the year.

"The overall foodgrain production during the whole year may be as good as in the best rainfall year of 1988-89," said the agriculture secretary, Mr. R.C. Kapila, in a press conference here today. About 170.25 million tonnes of grains were produced that year.

The advance estimate of production of foodgrains in the current kharif season collected from states indicate that it would be between 95 and 97 million tonnes, against the last kharif's output of 100.5 million tonnes and this year's target of 103.1 million tonnes. Kharif coarse cereals may also fall short of the target. However, rainfall during the end of this month and early next month would be crucial for the late-sown crop.

The output of kharif oilseeds is estimated at about ten million tonnes, which is higher than the last season. Cotton production, too, is likely to be about ten percent more than that in last year. It is likely to be between 11 and 12 million bales. The production of jute and mesta is estimated at 8.5 million bales and that of sugarcane at 231.3 million tonnes.

In view of the adequate availability of moisture in soil and extremely good storage position in major water reservoirs, the states have agreed to work towards a rabi target of 82 to 83 million tonnes. This includes 9.74 million tonnes of rice, 58.84 million tonnes of wheat, 6.44 million tonnes coarse cereals and 10.7 million tonnes pulses. The target for oilseeds has been pitched at nine million tonnes.

It has been decided that concerted efforts should be made to expand crop coverage as also to maximise productivity by encouraging proper cropping sequences. A water budget would be prepared jointly by the ministries of agriculture and water resources to take care of the crops' requirements at critical stages. Detailed plans would be prepared for ensuring timely supply of farm inputs. These measures would be supported by suitable and timely extension messages.

Expansion of area under paddy in West Bengal and the peninsula region would receive special attention to make up for the anticipated shortfall in the current kharif.

Many states have indicated that the contingency plans drawn up by them after being alerted by the centre about a possible erratic monsoon precipitation have proved useful in tackling the situation arising out of the delayed rains.

The centre has released Rs[rupees]135 crores as short term loan to states for advance stocking of fertilisers, seeds and pesticides. Besides, it has released Rs 100 crores for the subsidy scheme for small and marginal farmers. The fertiliser consumption has shown a strong growth in the current kharif. The rabi requirement has been worked out with the projected growth of five percent over previous season. The total consumption is anticipated to grow by around seven to eight percent.

The states have been asked to pay attention to improving fertiliser-use efficiency through measures like soil testing and application of precise doses.

Monopolies, Trade Practices Act Amended

92AS0102A *Madras THE HINDU in English*
28 Sep 91 p 1

[Text] New Delhi, 27 Sep—The Government today promulgated an Ordinance to amend the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices (MRTP) Act of 1969. With this amendment, the requirement for large companies to seek prior approval of the Union Government for expansion, establishment of new undertaking, merger, amalgamation, takeover and appointment of directors has been eliminated.

At the same time, the provisions of the Act have been strengthened so as to give more powers to the MRTP Commission with a view to taking effective steps to curb and regulate monopolistic, restrictive and unfair trade practices which are prejudicial to public interest and also to provide for deterrent punishment for contravention of the orders passed by the Commission and the Government.

Provision Shifted

Giving details of the Ordinance, the Minister of State for Law, Justice and Company Affairs, Mr. P.R. Kumaramangalam, told presspersons here today that while eliminating the pre-entry restrictions and other time-consuming procedures, (which have been achieved by dropping the provisions of Sections 20 to 26 of the Act), the Government

had not given up the concept of interconnection or market dominance, the definition of which continues to be 25 per cent of the market share. Only, this provision has been shifted from the MRTP Act to the Companies Act, 1956.

In technical terms, Chapter III-A of the MRTP Act regarding restrictions on acquisition and transfer of shares has been shifted to the Companies Act which has been expanded to include Sections 108-A to 108-I. However, no undertaking will be required to be registered as an MRTP undertaking as was necessary under Section 26 of the MRTP Act which has been dropped.

Simultaneously, notification is being issued under Section 3 of the MRTP Act directing that the Act would apply to all undertakings and financial institutions specified therein except trade unions and associations of workmen under Clause (d). It means that now public sector units would also be covered under the Act so far as the provisions of the restrictive trade practices are concerned. Consumers would, therefore, now be able to complain to the MRTP Commission, or the Commission might take *suo motu* notice, of unfair and restrictive practices by electricity and water supply authorities, Railways, Airlines, banks including the financial institutions such as the IDBI [International Development Bank of India] and IFCI [Industrial Finance Corporation of India], the issue of shares before allotment, chit funds and real estate business.

However, Government undertakings engaged in the production of Defence equipment, specified minerals, atomic energy and Government mints will continue to be kept out of the purview of the Act. This was necessary from the State security point of view, the Minister said.

According to Mr. Kumaramangalam, while the elimination of pre-entry restrictions was done in line with the new industrial policy, bringing the public sector on par with the private sector by withdrawing the immunity under the Act was prompted by the numerous representations from various organisations in this regard. The Committee on Petitions (Eighth Lok Sabha) had also urged the Government to issue notification under Section 3 of the MRTP Act to do away with the distinction between the public and private sector in the context of the Act. Also, in view of the removal of pre-entry restrictions under the Act, there was no justification for continuing with the exemption granted to Government companies.

Panel To Be Strengthened

The Minister disclosed that to cope with the new and enlarged task, the MRTP Commission would be strengthened, both in terms of manpower and judicial provisions. Deterrent penal provisions have been provided under Sections 48C and 50 for contravention of the orders passed by the Commission and the Central Government. At the same time, a new Section 53A has been incorporated empowering the Commission to compound offences relating to contravention of order passed by it. However, Section 55 has been amended to provide for appeal before the Supreme Court against temporary injunction granted by the Commission under Section 12-A.

Since Sections 21, 22 and 23 of the MRTP Act relating to pre-entry restrictions have been dropped, all pending applications would be treated as closed. Also, pending applications relating to dominant undertakings under Section 30-B and 30-C of the MRTP Act would be further processed under the new Sections of the Companies Act and all other pending applications under Sections 30-B and 30-C would be treated as closed.

Definition Enlarged

UNI reports:

While enlarging the definition of the "unfair trade practice" the ordinance has included "false representation in respect of quantity of goods also."

The ordinance also inserted new sections in the Companies Act for restriction on acquisition of certain shares and on transfer of shares.

The restriction on the transfer of shares of foreign companies stipulate that no company having equity share capital of a foreign company shall transfer any share in such foreign company without the approval of the Central Government.

Apex organisations of trade and industry have welcomed the MRTP (Amendment) Ordinance.

The president of Assocham, Mr. N. Sankar, said the Ordinance reflected that the Government was committed to the implementation of the new industrial policy, announced earlier.

Mr. Sankar was confident that this step would help in accelerating modernisation of the Indian industry through expansion of existing industry and the setting up of new industry by MRTP companies.

Dr. V.L. Dutt, president of FICCI [Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry], said these changes would help enable enterprises to achieve economies of scale, thereby reducing the cost of production to enable them to compete effectively in the world market.

Inflation, Failing Economy Explored

92AS0119C Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English
25 Sep 91 p 8

[Text] The economy is in the grip of an inflationary spiral with its annualised rate crossing 15 percent at the end of August. The sudden spurt in prices comes after a relatively moderate 6.9 percent hike in the April-July period. The government's expressed desire to peg the inflation rate at 9 percent for the 1990-91 fiscal year seems very unrealistic in the face of projections based on present trends, which vary from a minimum of 13 percent to an alarmist 18-25 percent conflagration. The most obvious reasons for the sudden price acceleration after July are the rupee devaluation and the Union budget levies but there are other contributing factors like the failure of the tight monetary and fiscal policy and the general inflationary psychology

that has prompted trade and business to ride the wave and maximise income. What is remarkable about the trend is the unrelenting increase in the price of primary products, including foodgrains and food articles, which leads to more pressures specially on the meagre economy of the rural and the urban poor. The hope for the seasonal fall in prices before winter may not come about, because the kharif harvest is unlikely to be as good as expected. Coupled with the precipitous decline in the growth of agriculture (to one percent from 4.5 in 1990-91) and industry (to 6 percent from 8.4) this year, predicted by the Reserve Bank of India [RBI] annual report early this month, and the consequent fall in income, the weaker sections will be hit particularly hard by the run-away prices.

The RBI report also projected a fall in the growth rate of the economy to three percent this year as against the government's hope for a modest four percent. This is in congruity with the assessment of the World Bank, which in its annual report, has warned against many 'pitfalls that await the new government' in India and advised it to address itself to the many structural reform issues inhibiting growth in the economy [quotation marks as published]. The report speaks of serious macro-economic difficulties, accompanied by political uncertainties, having impeded the progress of plans to deregulate industry, liberalise trade and improve the climate for private sector activity. If the reference to the political factor is born out of a new awareness in the Bank of the legitimate internal constraints on India and other similarly placed countries in the implementation of reform policies, it shows a willingness to temper ideological zeal with a sense of reality, and is welcome. However, the Bank's report pricks a lot of air out of the government's claim, after the Aid India Consortium meeting in Paris, of full endorsement of the new reform policies by the Bank and other donors. It is now also realised that the increase in the aid commitment is not as hefty as made out to be.

Inflation Rate End of August at 15.3 Percent

92AS0088A Madras INDIAN EXPRESS in English
17 Sep 91 p 9

[Excerpts] New Delhi, 16 Sep (Express News Service)—The government is at once seriously concerned over the gathering momentum of inflation and hopeful that prices will begin to decline from October. The annual rate of inflation is 15.3 per cent as estimated at the end of last month, while it was 7.6 per cent around this time last year.

Finance Minister Manmohan Singh made no attempt to conceal the gravity of the price situation while replying to a calling attention notice in the Rajya Sabha on Monday.

He said the acceleration in the rate of inflation was a cause for "serious concern" because it had taken place in spite of three successive bumper harvests and the prospect of a normal monsoon this year.

Dr. Manmohan Singh agreed with members that inflation in recent months had caused major concern because it was concentrated in essential commodities like foodgrains,

vegetables, pulses, edible oils, tea and sugar. The increase in the prices of rice, jowar, urad, arhar, milk, eggs, tea, sugar, salt, etc. was higher in last April-August than in the corresponding period last year. But it was lower in the case of items like gram, onion, atta, mustard oil, groundnut oil and saris.

Giving an outline of the inflationary situation, the Finance Minister said the wholesale price index registered an increase of 8.6 per cent in the first five months of the current financial year as against 6.5 per cent during the same period last year. The figures for consumer price index were 6.5 per cent during April-July this year and 6.8 per cent during the corresponding period last year.

Dr. Manmohan Singh said that the inflationary build-up in recent years was due to the "large and persistent" fiscal deficits which were inevitably monetised leading to excessive growth in money supply. The acceleration in the rate of inflation in the current year was, according to the Finance Minister, due to (1) liquidity over-hand inherited from the past, (2) increase in administered prices of petroleum products, fertiliser and sugar, (3) serious constraint on supply management through imports as a result of the precarious balance of payments position and (4) inflationary expectations on account of exchange rate adjustments in early July.

The Finance Minister was confident that the fiscal prudence and the monetary discipline that had been effected would have a strong deflationary impact on the price level after a short time lag. He also noted that there was a seasonal pattern in price behaviour, prices rising in the first and second quarters of the financial year. The government, he said, gave the highest priority to bringing down the rate of inflation.

All members who spoke on the calling attention expressed concern over rising prices and the hardship caused to the common man. Mr. Gurudas Dasgupta who initiated the discussion argued that the inflationary spiral was directly attributable to the government's new philosophy of non-intervention. This had, he felt, brought the economy to a point of disaster. The crisis was much graver than revealed through what Mr. Das Gupta described as Dr. Manmohan Singh's statistical jugglery. [passage omitted]

Price Rise 'Unabated'

In his prepared statement earlier, the Finance Minister said the increase in prices 'continued unabated so far in 1991-92.'

He said the annual rate of inflation, calculated on a point-to-point basis in the wholesale price index was 15.3 per cent on 31 August 1991, as compared with 7.6 per cent on 1 Sept. 1990.

However, the annual rate of inflation on the basis of 52-week averages of the wholesale price index had registered a moderate increase from 10.2 per cent on 30 March 1991 to 11.7 per cent as of 31 August last, Dr. Manmohan Singh said.

Noted economist C.P. Thakur, Cong-I, and his party colleague, Mr. V. Narayanaswamy, blamed the new alarming inflationary pressure on 'total mismanagement' of the erstwhile National Front government.

The two members said the National Front government had pampered the rich class with frequent raise in procurement prices and thrusting elections on the people.

They demanded immediate strengthening of the public distribution system and taking of stern action against blackmarketeers and hoarders.

Mr. M.S. Gurupadasamy (JD) [Janata Dal] said the devaluation and the present budget was responsible for the unprecedented rise in inflation. He also called for radical reforms to check the price rise.

Wrong Policies

Mr. K.L. Sharma (BJP) [Bharatiya Janata Party] blamed the present economic ills facing the country on wrong financial policies pursued for the last 40 years. He said the public distribution system had become rotten.

Mr. Sharma called for incentives to be given to genuine producers and not middlemen and relief to consumers, specially fixed income groups and weaker sections.

Mr. Sukomal Sen (CPM) [Communist Party of India-Marxist] demanded that the government come forward with a drastic action plan to check excessive unproductive expenditure. He also blamed the present unprecedented inflationary pressure on devaluation.

Commentary Views 'Controversial' Economic Policies

92AS0139B Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English
28 Sep 91 p 8

[Article by Balraj Mehta: "The People's Fears Are Justified"; quotation marks as published]

[Text] The on-going controversy on policy issues, especially socio-economic and technological, has assumed novel dimensions and intensity.

The government headed by Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao may like to preen itself for its skilful management of the just concluded budget session of Parliament in which a determined challenge to its policy positions has been averted, but it would be deluding itself if it were to now feel easy about the implementation of its policies.

Warning

This is clearly the import of the statement signed by over 250 MPs [members of Parliament] belonging to all parties, including the Congress and a number of eminent citizens on GATT negotiations on international trade.

The statement is a stern warning to the Government against succumbing to the mounting pressure of the developed countries, in particular the United States, on critical

issues concerning international trade, such as TRIP (Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights), TRIM (Trade Related Investment Measures), the trade in services and the trade in farm commodities, which are reaching a "critical stage of conclusion" in the GATT round.

It is indeed remarkable that the relatively small National Working Group on Patent Laws, established four years ago by certain citizens, businessmen and scientists against the concerted moves of the developed countries for drastically changing India's Patent Law of 1970 to strictly conform to the World Patents Convention, has been able to secure the support of such a wide spectrum of political and public opinion behind this sound warning to the Government.

This should make the Government pause and think before going ahead with what is euphemistically called the economic adjustment programme for the Indian economy as proposed by the foreign creditors, above all the IMF. The issues in the GATT round and the adjustment programme dictated by the IMF, World Bank and foreign creditors in general, are very much intertwined.

The statement issued by the MPs and other citizens does not mince words. It declares that, if India does not take a firm stand against the designs of the developed countries, not only will India's national objectives of self-reliance, competitiveness and development of technological capabilities be at stake but "also our political sovereignty will be in jeopardy." It goes on to state that "foreign monopolies through the powerful multinational corporations would get entrenched both in production and trading."

For more than 250 MPs belonging to all parties to raise their voice in an unambiguous manner against the policy shifts on socio-economic and technological issues is something which any government in a democracy cannot ignore. It is no longer an intervention against the so-called liberalisation policy shifts of the Government by certain vested interests; it has assumed formidable political dimensions. It will be insanity on the part of the Government to dismiss this intervention as the ravings of a fringe group in politics and academia.

The matters raised in the statement are of a substantive nature and controvert the Government's policy trends on vital issues which have been unfolding in recent times. The trend of the GATT negotiations, which concern the norms for international trade, so far indicates the diabolic designs of the developed countries, headed by the United States. They pose a grave threat to a fair and equitable multilateral trading system.

The EEC, Japan and the United States have not yet reached a definite consensus on resolving the agricultural subsidy and related trade problems. The developed and the developing countries have not reached an understanding on the dismantling of the Multi-Fibre Agreement. But the most thorny are the TRIP, TRIM and trade in services issues. The developing countries should be keenly aware of the predetermined package on these issues which is being pushed by the developed countries through the GATT round.

Dangerous

In the course of what are called "green-room" negotiations, the developed countries led by the United States have adopted the stance: "pick it or leave it." They want "multilateralism" on their terms and according to their standards. It is an unequal world and it would be dangerous if the economic laws of the developed countries have to be adopted by India under duress.

The economic independence of developing countries, including India, is thus at stake. If the EC countries can take a stand against the United States on the status of "Most Favoured Nation," there is no reason why the developing countries, as a group, should not join hands and take a stand in the GATT negotiations to safeguard their interests.

The question of the Indian patent law has figured prominently in the context of the GATT round on TRIP and TRIM and deserves special attention. It has been regarded as a model legislation on the subject for the developing countries.

Main Aim

The basic philosophy of the Indian Act on Patents is that patents are granted to encourage inventions and to secure that the inventions are worked in India on a commercial scale to the fullest extent and without undue delay. Patents are not granted in India merely to allow the patentee to enjoy monopoly for the import of patented articles. The philosophy of the Indian Act is that the patents granted in this country should be worked by the patent-holder to subserve the larger public interest. There are various provisions of this Act which ensure that the working of the patent becomes unavoidable.

The Indian patent regime also excludes certain vital areas of the economy such as agriculture, horticulture, atomic energy inventions, etc. from patentability. Further, in regard to the process-based industries, product patents are not granted. Instead, process patents are granted keeping the interests of both the user and the inventor in view.

The demand of the developed countries for far-reaching changes and adjustments in India's patents regime is that patentability should cover, without discrimination, all industrially applicable products and processes. The developed countries do not want exclusion of agricultural and horticultural products. They want process patents for food, medicines and other process-based industries to be replaced by product patents.

They want the life of the patent to be 20 years. They also demand that the patent should not be revoked for non-working in India. Where the patent is not worked in India but importation of products under patent protection takes place, the requirement of the working of the patent should be treated as fully satisfied.

Then, the developed countries want the 'burden of proof' in regard to process patents to be reversed and made applicable for the infringer to prove that his process is a

novel one. These demands suggest that the developed countries want exclusive reservation of the Indian market for their exports. They are totally unconcerned about the needs of the people of the developing countries.

Having raised the substantive issues which must be negotiated by India in the GATT round in the spirit of national interest and Third World solidarity, the statement of those MPs and eminent citizens raised a fundamental issue concerning democratic functioning in the tackling of issues of national importance and public interest.

The statement avers that "the worst aspect of the GATT Agreement/Treaty is that the role of Parliament in law-making will be substantially curtailed. To protect the sovereignty and dignity of the Indian people and Parliament, we seek that the Government place a resolution to reiterate the need for the ratification by Parliament of international treaties entailing the introduction of new legislation and wholesale amendment of existing legislation and incurring financial costs. This will assure the Indian people and parliamentarians that the debate at the GATT treaty ratification stage will not be a mere formality."

The statement also demands a full-scale debate in Parliament immediately to work out a comprehensive and unambiguous stand on GATT issues and the Special 301 of the U.S. trade law. The point to note is that the majority of MPs entertain serious apprehensions about the intentions of the Government and want to guard against anything being done by it without bringing into play the democratic process.

Wider Field

This itself is of far-reaching importance in a functioning democracy. The statement, therefore, marks a powerful assertion of popular sentiment versus government policies which is bound to enrich the content of Indian democracy.

Its repercussions will be felt both in the long run and over a wider field than just prevent mischief in the GATT round of negotiations. It will promote a sense of accountability in the power-political system which has of late tended to weaken.

Third Devaluation of Rupee Predicted

92AS0119A Secunderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE
in English 16 Sep 91 p 1

[Article by Subir Roy: "Another Devaluation Likely"]

[Text] New Delhi, 15 September—The exchange rate policy that has been followed since the twin devaluations of the rupee in early July may have laid the foundations of another devaluation in the not too distant future, with all the attendant consequences that we are currently witnessing.

The pressure of another devaluation has started building up through the severe inflationary forces that have been let loose by the July devaluations. This has happened at a time

when the external value of the rupee has remained surprisingly stable, while the world has witnessed major political upheavals and sharp fluctuations in currency values.

The sharp 20 percent July devaluations were considered necessary as the rupee's value had remained static through the latter part of last year when the Indian economy was experiencing severe inflation. This had eroded the competitiveness of Indian exports. No wonder, Indian export growth in 1990-91 was a miserable nine percent in dollar terms. In order to regain our competitive edge and earn more through exports to improve our balance of payments position, we had to go in for a sharp drastic devaluation and then get on with the work of raising exports.

The world had thankfully put behind itself the unnecessary political turmoil associated with sharp, large devaluations with the advent of the era of floating rates when currencies gradually depreciated or appreciated in bits and pieces over time. India also followed suit by tying the rupee to a basket of currencies whose weights were determined by the importance of various currencies for our trade.

But strangely, this basket mechanism seems to have stopped functioning after 4 July, since then the world witnessed first a major upheaval in the form of the Soviet coup of 19 August, which thereafter came unstuck. After the coup, the U.S. dollar firmed up against major currencies, quoting at DM[deutsche marks] 1.82 to the dollar and \$1.62 to the pound sterling. But by last weekend, partly because of the failure of the Soviet coup and the restoration of a semblance of normality in the Soviet Union, the dollar has receded to DM 1.69 and \$1.72 to the pound.

Through all this, the rupee has remained as solid as the Himalayas and as unmoved as the hermits who supposedly reside there. Over the period, the rupee value fluctuated within a narrow band of Rs.[rupees]25.70-26.04 to the dollar. If the rupee was really linked to a basket of currencies, then would not the ups and downs of the dollar, sterling and deutsche mark have had some impact on its value?

What is most disturbing is that since early July, the country has witnessed a 5.3 percent inflation in terms of the wholesale price index. Thus, other things remaining equal, the effective devaluation of the rupee is now down to 14.7 percent and not 20 percent. If inflation continues at this rate, as is expected for a few months at least, we will have to go in for a sharp devaluation again, having given up the practice of depreciating steadily. Without such an exchange rate correction, our exports should lose their competitiveness, going by the theory that brought about the devaluations in the first place.

The cornerstone of any developing country's exchange rate policy is to retain the competitiveness of its exports by devaluing at least to the extent of its major trade competitors vis-a-vis the export market's currency. Bangladesh had already introduced a subsidy to aid its jute exports after the new buoyancy of Indian jute exports in the post-devaluation period.

The villain of the piece seems to be the sharp devaluations, as opposed to the gradual depreciation practised over the last several years. The sharp devaluations have unleashed a wave of price increases which bear no relationship to the actual import content of goods, thus demonstrating again that such acts release tremendous inflationary expectations. A gradual depreciation would serve the same purpose without the attendant inflationary side effect in such a pronounced and prompt manner.

Then why did we do it? The International Monetary Fund (IMF) would not have brought the Indian argument that it would be carrying out the same depreciation in the rupee's value "gradually". Neither would the non-resident Indians who were withdrawing their foreign currency deposits, in the absence of a restoration in international financial confidence in India. That could only come through an injection of IMF funds as well as a pat on the back that we are at last getting things right.

As a result of our exchange rate and import control policies we have witnessed an unusual spectacle in the Indian foreign exchange markets in the last few weeks. The rupee has been riding high, at the top of the band fixed by the Reserve Bank of India. With all the import restrictions and the directive to importers to seek 180-365 days credit, there are no takers for spot dollars.

The Indian Oil Corporation has been obtaining trade credit at 2-3 percent over London Inter-Bank Offered Rate (LIBOR) compared to the spread of 0.5-0.75 available till early last year. Trade payments for the first four months of the current financial year indicate a sluggishness in exports along with a drastic cut in imports.

Serious Oil Crisis Predicted by Century's End

92AS0152A *New Delhi PATRIOT* in English
23 Sep 91 p 8

[Text] Ranchi, 22 Sep (UNI)—India may face a serious oil crisis at the end of the current century unless substantial new reserves are found before that, Central Mine Planning and Design Institute chairman R.N. Mishra has warned.

With consumption rising to 73 million tonnes per annum by the end of the century, all the oil wells will have burnt by 2005, Mr. Mishra remarked in an article on "Energy supply outlook in the next 25 years."

At most, the life of the reserve can be stretched to 2020 if the consumption is restricted to 50 million tonnes through strict adherence to principles of conservation, said Mr. Mishra, head of one of the seven subsidiaries of Coal India Limited.

In addition, the total stock of coal can be enhanced to 750 million tonnes through establishment of additional geological reserves and intensive application of improved technology in oil exploration and drilling.

Unless a big reserve is struck with the present rate of consumption, the reserve ratio will fall to an alarmingly low level, Mr. Mishra pointed out.

There will be a growth in oil consumption at the rate of 5.8 percent annually by the turn of the century mainly due to rapid rise in demand for automobiles and expanding industries besides the increasing transport sector, he said.

In natural gas with which the vital cooking gas for the domestic sector is prepared, there will be a shortfall of

nearly 15 million cubic metres annually on the basis of projections of three per cent growth rate beyond 2000 years.

By 2000 AD the oil consumption in India will be around 44 million tonnes annually.

Further Reportage on Defense Development

Indigenization Stressed

92AS0092A Bombay *THE TIMES OF INDIA* in English
24 Sep 91 p 5

[Text] Bombay, 23 Sep—Indian industries have a potential for weapons manufacture and export, the director-general, Naval Armament Supply Organisation, Mr. Y.P. Rao, said here today.

He told newsmen here that the organisation, which completes 50 years on Wednesday, laid emphasis on indigenisation and safety.

The unit was responsible for acquiring and supplying torpedoes, missiles, rockets and new weapons to the ships and submarines of the Indian Navy and the Coast Guard.

Mr. Rao said the organisation had placed an order worth Rs[rupees]20 crores with private industries for the supply of batteries to the navy. "We are completely satisfied," he said.

Mr. Rao said costly weapons needed care and therefore, called for a pragmatic approach in view of the rapid technological changes in the field of weaponry.

The director-general said in order mark the 50th anniversary, a special cover and a brochure tracing the development of the body would be released.

A seminar has also been scheduled to discuss the future needs of the armament organisation. The seminars would be held in Bombay, Cochin and Vishakapatnam, he said.

He said India's dependence on Soviet arms was considerably reduced.

Regarding indigenisation, he said, initially there were teething problems because suppliers were unaware of the stringent standards. "When we put them through a tough test we discover some of the failure," he said. However, he was happy that things had improved.

Mr. Rao said naval weapons were basically high-tech and their cost was quite exorbitant. Torpedoes, he said, might cost something between few lakhs to a crore of rupees each in foreign exchange.

Modern naval armament technology incorporated signal processing, underwater acoustics, signal acquisition and micro processor-based circuitry which was utilised in the latest war machines for anti-submarine and anti-ship role, he said.

Similarly, he said, a modern missile system with a micro-processor based circuits provided increased inflexibility accuracy and confidence levels to the navy. In this context, he said, the organisation was in the process of evaluating various missiles under the country's prestigious Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme.

According to him the unit is a study in contrast. On the one hand, it looks after conventional ammunition and equipment like rifles, guns, revolvers, depth charges and bombs, and on the other hand, it deals with modern equipment like torpedoes, missiles and rockets.

He said the storage and warehousing of various ammunition and explosives was done under special conditions. The body also interacted with various research and development agencies towards the development of new ammunition, weapons, torpedoes, missiles and rockets.

Mr. Rao said the unit carried out all the tasks pertaining to the management of armaments, ammunition and sophisticated weapons for the navy and the Coast Guard and carried out bulk handling of all explosives for the three services—army, navy and air force.

Air Force Capabilities

92AS0092B Bombay *THE TIMES OF INDIA* in English
23 Sep 91 p 3

[Text] AMLA (Madhya Pradesh), 22 Sep (PTI)—On a pitch dark night an Indian Air Force [IAF] plane with sophisticated sensors flies stealthily at a low altitude in the enemy territory escaping detection from radar.

Having selected the enemy's vulnerable areas, the plane drops reconnaissance flare bombs which light up the whole area like daylight. Soon another batch of IAF planes arrive at this area and start bombarding the targets with pinpoint accuracy and precision, blowing enemy targets into smithereens.

Another IAF aircraft spots an enemy airfield with a large number of planes ready for take off. Deftly manoeuvring his plane against the incessant barrage of anti-aircraft fire, the pilot presses a button releasing a huge cluster bomb which is the size of three cooking gas cylinders joined together.

As this cluster bomb falls, it releases 147 bomblets which fall in different places in the airstrip destroying it completely. The IAF has paralysed the enemy.

The IAF pilots' daring deeds are made possible by a band of young IAF personnel, the "backroom boys," who are in charge of storage house of air power arsenal in Amla, the ammunition land of the Indian Air Force.

A team of journalists from Nagpur, who visited Amla—almost in the centre of India—saw a demonstration of the striking capabilities of the explosives and bombs, methods of storing, repairing, categorising and proof-testing them before they are loaded into the aircraft for sorties.

Talking to reporters, station commander group captain, Ajit Sahai, said during the past year, over 1,500 wagons containing over 700 tons of explosives were handled by the Amla depot. This is looked after by the logistics section.

"Although the maximum consumption and therefore movement of armament stores takes place during wartime, yet the peace-time "load" is no less gigantic in nature," he added.

Due to their chemical nature, the explosives have a specified storage life. They have to be maintained in humid-free containers and life-expired components have to be changed periodically.

In ammunition workshops, maintenance and repair activities are carried out on aircraft bombs. Here the bursting devices are removed, checked and replaced if necessary.

Initially named 'XMU' (Explosive Maintenance Unit), air force station Amla was rechristened "No. 28 equipment depot" in 1984. Spread over an extensive area of 10,000 acres, it is the storage-house of the country's air power arsenal.

The gentle undulations of the terrain around Amla provide a natural barrier in the event of a blast. Nature too leads a helping hand here. The thick jungle effectively camouflages the various warehouses and installations. The high altitude provides a moderate climate throughout the year—ideal for storage of explosives. And the heavy monsoon ensures a lush green growth, effectively warding off the possibility of grass fires.

The work which the IAF personnel are engaged in at the ammunition depot in Amla is not less dangerous than that of the pilots on their sorties or soldiers at the front. A slight carelessness or negligence can result in a catastrophe. As one squadron leader said, "You can make mistake only once. You won't live for the second."

The extent of danger can be gauged by the fact that the personnel not only have to be careful in handling armament stores but also have to be expert in disposing of unexploded enemy bombs or those fitted with delayed timing mechanisms.

Here training is also provided on how to deal with improvised explosive devices.

The unsung heroes who risk their lives every day handling dangerous explosive devices like toys to keep India's enemies at bay follow the motto, "Keep your morale high and powder dry."

Navy Strategy

92AS0092C Madras *INDIAN EXPRESS* in English
18 Sep 91 p 8

[Article by Rahul Roy-Chaudhury: "Indian Navy: A Change in Strategy?"]

[Text] Just over two months ago, Defence Minister Sharad Pawar stated in the Lok Sabha that the construction of a third aircraft carrier was not necessary. He added that the navy's existing two carriers are sufficient to defend India's territorial waters. Although these statements do not preclude the replacement of an existing carrier from a foreign

shipyard, such a transaction would not be of much value to the Indian Navy. The Narasimha Rao Government, therefore, appears to have advocated a major change in the role and composition of the Indian Navy in the future.

The Indian Navy's aspirations for a 'blue water' fleet were met largely by the acquisition of a second carrier, the Viraat, in 1987. This carrier was not a replacement for the first carrier (the Vikrant), but an expansion of the carrier force. Essentially, it doubled the number of carrier-borne aircraft (including ASW helicopters) to 36, and augmented the navy's combat capability. More importantly, the Viraat ensured that a single carrier was operational at all times.

A Spare Carrier

In the late 1990s the Vikrant would be some 50-plus years old. Its performance and effectiveness would have deteriorated considerably. In this period, only one of the navy's two carriers could seriously be considered operational. This would mean that during the time the Viraat was laid up in dry dock for maintenance work (a couple of months every two years, on an average), the navy would not be able to employ any carrier in the Indian Ocean. In order to rectify this situation and maintain a single carrier operational at all times, the Government in the late 1980s agreed, in principle, to replace the older carrier (the Vikrant).

For political and economic reasons, including emphasis on the indigenous warship-building capacity, and the conservation of foreign exchange, the navy agreed to build the carrier in India. In terms of prestige, moreover, India would become one of seven states in the world to build an aircraft carrier, and the only one amongst the developing countries. The operational requirements of the navy necessitated a carrier of some 30,000 tonnes, with the length of the flight deck sufficient to accommodate 30-40 Short Take-Off and Vertical Landing (STOVL) or catapult-launched Conventional Take-Off and Landing (CTOL) aircraft.

The Narasimha Rao Government apparently has decided to put an end to this plan. If, however, it intends to replace the Vikrant by the end of the decade, there are two options before it—

- a) to place an order for a new carrier in a foreign shipyard, or
- b) procure an older carrier presently in operation.

Although the Nikolayev shipyard is presently constructing two carriers, it is unlikely that an Indian order will be placed in the Soviet Union. The terms of the contract, which would include excessive manufacturing costs and payment in hard currency, are not likely to appeal to the Indian Government. While shipyards in the United Kingdom, France, Spain and Italy would be delighted to entertain this order, the costs would be prohibitive. American shipyards may not be willing to build a carrier for India for political reasons.

If India were to acquire an operational carrier, it would need to do so from one of the eight other countries which maintain a total of 30 carriers. The best bet appears to be France. One of the two French carriers, the Clemenceau, is likely to be decommissioned in 1998. The 33,000-tonne carrier, launched in 1957, is capable of operating some 36 catapult-launched fixed-wing strike, ASW, MR and air defence aircraft. While the French Government may agree to sell the carrier to India on relatively favourable terms, it would be effective in the Indian Navy only for another 15 years.

The option to replace the Vikrant from a foreign shipyard would, at best, result in a carrier nearly as old as the Viraat. In this respect, it is advisable to examine the implications for the Indian fleet in functioning without a carrier operational at all times.

A Role To Play

First, India's growing maritime interests would not be adequately defended. The Indian economy remains dependent on merchant shipping for some 97 per cent of its foreign trade; in 1991-92, this will include the import of some 20 million tonnes of crude petroleum. The EEZ [Exclusive Economic Zone] increased India's area of responsibility to over two million sq. km. of sea. The value of mineral resources extracted from the seabed, including hydrocarbons and manganese nodules, is increasing.

Without a carrier during warfare, the navy would not be able to maintain "sea control" over its area of operation. It would be unable to ensure the air defence of merchant convoys beyond the range of land-based aircraft, or provide additional ASW resources to counter a conventional submarine threat. Although a carrier is not expected to defend each and every convoy throughout its journey, it could accompany critical shipments in areas where the likelihood of airborne/submarine attacks are high. In addition, the navy would not be able to provide effective air support to units of the fleet patrolling the EEZ or guarding ships extracting minerals from the seabed. This could possibly deter naval ships from carrying out such tasks. In effect, the navy would be forced to abdicate its 'blue water' role, and confine itself largely to coastal duties.

Wartime Offensive

Secondly, the navy's offensive punch in a war against Pakistan would be less effective. While the carrier is not expected to repeat the 1971 performance of the Vikrant in a future war against Pakistan, its employment is critical to naval operations. Its aircraft would provide superior air defence of the task force in comparison to ship-launched surface-to-air missiles. The provision of continuous air patrol of the fleet would not be possible even within the range of land-based aircraft. In coordination with the Indian Air Force (IAF), the navy's Sea Harriers could attack military and economic targets in Pakistan, threaten the possibility of a seaward assault, and destroy Pakistani merchant ships.

Although the deployment of the carrier presents a high-value target to Pakistani aircraft and submarines, this does

not necessarily erode its chances of survivability. In view of the numerical superiority of the IAF, the Pakistani Air Force would be severely stressed with simultaneous missions of the air defence and ground support. Within such a reduced threat environment, the Sea Harrier should be able to deal effectively with Pakistani combat aircraft. Also, Pakistani conventional submarines could be engaged at some distance from the carrier by the Indian Navy's multi-dimensional ASW forces. This could result in the destruction of the missile platform prior to the launch of missile.

Thirdly, the navy's suitability for the support of foreign policy objectives would decline. Amongst the different types of warships, the carrier is best suited to the function of naval diplomacy. While the nature of submarines and coastal combatants precludes their employment in such a role, the destroyers and frigates are not equipped with the requisite armaments. The aircraft of the carrier could be used to display naval prowess, and project power ashore. Land-based aircraft would not be able to sustain the necessary coercion. The presence of a carrier near a foreign coast would signify the commitment of the Government to the operation at hand.

Notwithstanding attempts at a "new world order," the nature of international relations remains fraught with uncertainty. In these circumstances, the utility of Indian naval diplomacy could increase. The security of small states in the Indian Ocean, for example, may be affected by internal turmoil or external influences. A carrier could assist the democratic governments in these countries. During the attempted coup in the Maldives in November 1988, IAF aircraft would not have been able to land at Hulule airport had the mercenaries blocked the runway. Paratroopers may not have been sent in due to a lack of adequate logistical support. In such a scenario, a carrier operation would have been necessary.

Some Suggestions

In order to defend India's maritime interests, the navy would need to compensate the lack of a carrier operational at all times. Some of the funds to be spent on the carrier, and associated weapon systems, could be allocated to the procurement of other naval arms. The composition of the Indian Navy could be modified to include AEW aircraft, and missile-carrying submarines and MR aircraft. Additional maritime strike aircraft could be based on several of India's strategic islands. In essence, the navy would emphasise missions to deny the use of the sea to hostile forces, rather than attempt to acquire 'control' over it.

The apparent decision of the Narasimha Rao Government to cancel the construction of the replacement carrier may have been based on sound economic grounds. However, it has far-reaching strategic implications for the navy. In order to maintain a coherent strategic doctrine, changes in the size and shape of the fleet would be necessary. In addition, the navy's aspirations for an effective 'blue water' fleet by the end of the decade, would be denied.

Defence Scientists Developing Supercomputers
92AS0086C Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English
1 Oct 91 p 7

[Text] New Delhi, Sept. 30 (PTI). Indian defence scientists have developed a parallel computer that will provide supercomputing speeds and are now working on an indigenous computer chip that will lead to personal computers.

Scientists at the Advanced Numerical Research and Analysis Group (Anurag) of the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) have developed two versions of the parallel computer, Pace-8 and Pace-16.

"These systems will have major applications in the civilian sector", Dr V.S. Arunachalam, Scientific Advisor to the Defence Minister ad Secretary DRDO, said at a computer exhibition here displaying the DRDO-developed systems.

The high-speed, user-friendly Pace systems, manufactured by the Electronic Corporation of India (ECIL), can be used in several number crunching applications, including geology, remote sensing, aircraft design and weather studies.

Anurag scientists are also working on an indigenous "vector pipelined floating point accelerator", called "Anuvec", which will help boost computational performance and help develop personal supercomputers and super minicomputers.

Commercialization: More powerful versions of Pace are now under development and the Pace-128 system will be ready for commercial manufacture next year, Dr Arunachalam said.

Although DRDO's Pace project was primarily intended for fluid dynamics studies which require high computational speeds, other areas of applications are image processing, artificial intelligence and simulation.

Anurag scientists have also designed a coprocessor called "Anuco" that can be plugged into any computer system to boost computer speeds. When linked to advanced versions of Pace, Anuco will help achieve supercomputing capabilities.

The ECIL, which is manufacturing the pace systems says they will provide supercomputational speeds at affordable prices. The systems are priced much lower than comparable imported systems.

The Pace system can have 8- 16- 32- 64- 128 nodal processors in a "hypercube architecture" to achieve computational speeds of 100 Mflops, comparable to supercomputers.

Other DRDO-developed systems on display at the exhibition, coinciding with the Computer Society of India's annual conference, are the mission computer for the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) and a robot with a visual sensor.

Dr Arunachalam said the mission computer which will manage on board avionics will be "totally validated" by the time the LCA is ready to fly by 1995.

The mission computer will enable efficient system-crew dialogue during critical mission phases and supervise coordination between sensors, displays and weapons.

The "Chatur robot" developed by DRDO's Center for Artificial Intelligence and Robotics, Bangalore, users can pick up objects in its visual field irrespective of their orientation.

Hindi's Failure as National Language Regretted

92P40014A New Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi
24 Sep 91 p 6

[Article by Prabash Joshi: "Who Wants Their Own Language"]

[Text] The majority of those who write to this paper are irritated and saddened by the failure of the president to deliver the national address in Hindi. There are also letters from those who are very excited because the Prime Minister spoke in Hindi. Many letters are on the subject of Hindi used on television with comments on the pronunciations by the news broadcasters. There are about the same number of letters on the language used in this paper. The majority of these writers object to the use of English and Urdu words. Some scholarly readers dislike seeing the language of the populace in print. There is enthusiasm among some for standardizing Hindi. The number of readers desiring to see the national language presented with a standardized spelling in all newspapers is not small. The greatest complaint in all of these letters, however, is that in spite of Hindi becoming the national language, English still holds sway all over the country and that this is a matter of great shame.

Hindi speakers worry greatly about their language. Yet why is there such soullessness among them? This attitude has caused the responsibility for establishing the respectability of their language to fall on the government, which is not doing anything about it. Before independence, Hindi was not the national language, yet it was accepted as such in the struggle for independence. After independence, those who opposed and who still oppose Hindi as the national language, knew then and know now that it and only it can be the national language of free India. A country who fought against the English certainly rejected retaining the English language as the administrative language. Speakers of other Indian languages had no fear of Hindi at that time. While proud of their own languages, they did not look down on Hindi. Yet after Hindi was made the national language, speakers of other languages felt the necessity to promote their own languages instead of Hindi.

Why did the national language of the independence movement come to face opposition as the national language of a free democratic country? Why have those who said farewell to the English language at the same time they bid farewell to the British come to the defense of English along

with defending their own language? Go to Punjab, Maharashtra, Bengal, or Tamil Nadu. The people and the governments there value English after their own respective languages. They all know that those who understand English get ahead. In reality, the people in these areas understand Hindi better than they do English and use it more often also. However, after their mother tongue, they like to use an international language. They do not understand the need to have a national language. The only place you will find three languages in use is at the central government level. State governments, other established ministries and businesses take the easy way out and avoid Hindi.

Upon becoming the official language, why did Hindi lose its status of voluntary acceptance as the national language? Are people uncomfortable with a court language? Is there something about the fact that it is used within the government that causes people to become alarmed and to feel that to accept it is to be imposed upon? In those regions where there are complaints regarding the imposition of Hindi, are the people actually against Hindi or against Delhi from which they feel alienated? In contrast to English, Hindi is much closer to the other Indian languages and much more native to them. English is the alien language that is being imposed upon them! However it [English] does not seem an imposition to Bengalis or to Tamils. Why those who are ready to give equality to English do not instead give this equality to Hindi?

Non-Hindi speakers should not resist Hindi because it became the national language. The language that is established as an official language is always different from the people's language. Previously Sanskrit, then Arabic and Persian, and finally English were established in this way. It is a fact that no matter how foreign a language was, those who mastered these languages felt great pride in doing so. This was especially true amongst those who continually dealt with the royal court and the ruling class. Greater importance was always given to what was said in the administrative language. Literature written in the court language always became respected very quickly. It always held a more important place than writings in the language of the populace.

Just as Hindi is the most widely spoken language in this country, so does its speakers have the greatest numerical representation in parliament. Morarji [Desai] and now Narasimha Rao are the only prime ministers to come from non-Hindi speaking areas, actually the only ones not from Uttar Pradesh. Amongst ministers in the central government, Hindi is always the language of the majority. It is certain that due to this fact, those from Hindi-speaking regions continue to run the country. Yet why don't politicians and bureaucrats from non-Hindi speaking areas learn the language and take pride in doing so just as their predecessors did in learning English, Arabic, and Persian? Why don't these bureaucrats and politicians understand that it is necessary to learn the language of those from whom they must have cooperation and blessings in order

to influence them. This is especially true when it is not only the language of those in positions of authority, but the official language also!

These questions have only one answer. Politicians, bureaucrats, and parliamentarians from Hindi-speaking areas themselves fail to take pride in their own language. If one visits the elite class in Hindi-speaking areas or those [Hindi-speakers] who live in Calcutta, Bombay, or Delhi, one will find that Hindi is not the language of pride among them. The English-language worshippers have not only become more established since the British left but also are even now increasing in number. When Hindi-speaking politicians, bureaucrats, industrialists, and officers do not take pride in nor give proper attention to their own language, how can they expect non-Hindi speakers to be inspired by the language or accept it as a required course of study. English holds overwhelming sway amongst the elite Hindi-speakers. This class can conduct their affairs and conversations in English. It is because of this that even after constitutionally Hindi became the official language, it never became the state language in fact. English was made the co-official language by this same elite because they wanted to use it as the de facto state language.

In actuality, the Hindi-speaking elite in conjunction with the English-speaking elite all over the country, has created a ruling class that does not favor the spread of regional languages. The elite all over the country take pride in conducting official affairs in English instead of in their own languages. Those who attempt to conduct these affairs in regional languages are regarded as limited, narrow, and provincial. Whenever there is an Indian-wide conference or program, people must deal with the English language. This is a gift left behind by the British. The elite, like the British preceding them, think that the use of Indian languages would only divide the country while the use of any one of them in administrative affairs simply cannot replace the use of English. If this foundation stone is removed, the country would fall apart. Even those who take pride in their own languages regard English as the rudder that if removed would result in the drowning (of the country) in permanent darkness and instability. We in this country are dependent on this same elite due to their dominance through use of the ruling language.

When there is an uproar raised against the imposition of Hindi, it is because of the fear that Hindi may have the ability to replace English. This would then be followed by other Indian languages becoming predominant in the administration of the respective provinces. The English-speaking elite is not ready to accept this. This is why they have taken a stand against Tamil, Bengali, and Malayalam. They know that Indian languages will lose this struggle and that English will remain supreme. The real issue is that of the perpetuation of the interests of the elites, not that of which language to use. This prevents the acceptance of Hindi and other Indian languages for use on an official basis. English has a firm hold on the translation process because Hindi is translated from (the official texts written in) English. The constitution gave Hindi this curse.

Rural Development Programs Viewed

92AS0086F Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English
2 Oct 91 p 8

[Article by S. Bangarappa]

[Text] Despite tremendous advances in the industrial sector, India even today lives in its villages, and its economy depends to a large extent on agriculture and related activities.

In Karnataka the agricultural sector contributed 36 percent of the net State domestic product during the year 1989-90. However, this sector cannot grow indefinitely and provide a reasonable standard of living for a growing population because the land available for increasing agricultural production is limited and irrigation is very expensive and again it has its limits. Agriculture, therefore, depends mainly on the monsoons.

Unemployment

Even otherwise, agriculture and its backward and forward integration activities provide employment only for 120 to 150 days in the year.

Consequently, the extent of unemployment in the State is increasing by leaps and bounds. It is estimated that the labor force in the State in the non-agricultural sector in the age group of 15 to 59 is around 6.78 millions at present. This is expected to increase to around 10.05 millions by the year 2001 which would mean that additional jobs will have to be created for more than 3.25 million people in the next ten years.

Taking into consideration the employment structure according to the 1981 census data and the likely changes that have taken place subsequently, additional employment generation in the industrial sector (including mining, quarrying, household and other than household industries) will have to be around 1.8 million in the next ten years—an average annual growth rate of 4 percent.

Therefore, the major issue that has to be tackled is to locate employment opportunities for the unemployed or under-employed laborers in the rural areas.

The need to provide gainful employment opportunities has been the basis for a number of schemes which the governments at the Central and State levels have been formulating and implementing since Independence. Programmes such as the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP), the Training of Rural Youths for Self-Employment (TRYSEM), the Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWACRA), the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY), etc. have all been taken up with the main purpose of training rural youths to enable them to engage in self-employment activities.

While these schemes have no doubt achieved success in certain areas, it is common knowledge that the beneficiaries under these schemes, have not been fully supported in their self-employment activity in respect of supply of raw

materials and marketing of finished products. It has also been noticed that many beneficiaries who have been trained under one or the other of the schemes mentioned above have not engaged in any self-employment activity.

In Karnataka, it is estimated that more than 20,000 youths who have been trained under the TRYSEM, SCP [expansion not given] and DIC (District Industries Center) schemes, are yet to take up any self-employment activity.

It is against this background that the Government has proposed to implement and ambitious rural industrialization programme under the name VISHWA—which was originally thought of by the great engineer-statesman of Karnataka, the late Sir M. Visvesvaraya.

VISHWA aims to integrate the existing schemes such as TRYSEM, IRDP, JRY, DWACRA, SCP, etc., and fill the glaring gaps present, in order to ensure full support for rural industries. While continuous supply of raw materials and complete support for marketing of finished products will be the major components of VISHWA, receiving special attention, the scheme will be equally concerned with technology upgradation infrastructural development, training and credit requirements.

Utilized

In this endeavour the existing infrastructural and management agencies will be fully utilized. Thus the District Industries Centers and District Supply and Marketing Societies (DSMS) will be the main implementing agencies of VISHWA at the district level. These agencies will be assisted by the Karnataka Small-Scale Industries Development Corporation (KSSIDC) for the supply of raw materials and the Karnataka Small Industries Marketing Corporation (KSIMC) for providing marketing support.

The Government expects that in the next 5 years around 1,07,000 units in the unorganized sector and 44,000 units in the organized sector will be established, generating additional employment for more than six lakh persons involving a total capital investment of Rs 570 crore. The programme is being launched today (October 2), in at least one village in each of the 206 rural assembly constituencies.

Government Support

VISHWA is an attempt to provide conscious, enlightened, constant and visible support to the rural entrepreneurs right from the training stage to the marketing of the finished products. The Government will ensure that the budgetary provisions available under the existing schemes are channeled to strengthen the rural industrialization programme.

Wherever there are gaps in the existing schemes, VISHWA will step in to fill up this gap. It is expected that during the next five years Rs[rupees]200 crore to Rs 225 crore would be required as government support towards:

- i. Training cost;
- ii. Strengthening and enlargement of training infrastructure;

iii. Strengthening and creation of an effective rural industrial infrastructure;

iv. Margin money support to the implementation agencies to provide full support to artisans, particularly for raw material supply and marketing of finished products.

Out of this, an amount of around Rs 125 crore to Rs 150 crore is expected to be available under the existing schemes mentioned above and the balance amount of Rs 100 crore will be provided by the Government under the VISHWA programme. We are optimistic that financial institutions and commercial banks will find VISHWA a very attractive investment possibility, which they have been in any case looking forward to and suggesting all these years, and meet the entire credit requirements of the artisans and entrepreneurs both for term loans and working capital.

Continuous supply of raw materials and assistance for marketing of finished products will receive the highest priority under the programme. In addition to strengthening the agencies which are involved in these activities, the Government will, wherever necessary, arrange supply of critical raw materials (such as sandalwood, bamboo, etc.) to the artisans at administered and/or subsidized prices.

Similarly, the costs of development which are likely to be incurred by the marketing agencies during the initial years will also be borne by the Government, to the extent necessary. But at the same time the effort will be to minimize the period of hand holding. Government support under the VISHWA programme will, therefore, be directed towards the following areas:

i. Strengthening of the existing training institutes and making them more effective and meaningful and setting up new facilities wherever required.

ii. Strengthening of the implementing agencies, particularly the District Supply and Marketing Societies, the Karnataka Small-Scale Industries Development Corporation and the Karnataka Small Industries Marketing Corporation to provide necessary forward and backward linkages to the rural entrepreneurs.

iii. Providing on a massive scale the requisite workplace infrastructure in the rural areas viz, equipping the common worksheds which are already existing and construction of new common worksheds wherever required.

Since the major objective of VISHWA is to generate continuous productive employment in the rural areas based on local resources and skills, it is only logical that Government support may be necessary for these units in the form of suitable purchase and price preference by all Government departments and agencies for a short period.

Quality

Later the quality of the products, their continuous availability and market competitiveness will be their mainstay and strength. It is intended that all the products under the

programme will be marketed under a common brand name, VISHWA, to meet modern marketing requirements.

VISHWA is a vision. It is an administrative challenge. It is also the only hope in an economy which has many imponderables. It is a sincere and honorable attempt to fulfil a commitment to the rural people of the State. It should succeed—and it will.

Delink Private Tuition From Public Examination

92AS0086E Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English
2 Oct 91 p 8

[Editorial Report]

[Text] By extending the ban on private tuitions to teachers working in private affiliated colleges, the Directorate of Collegiate Education in Karnataka has formulated a uniform code of conduct which should ensure better academic standards. The ban was imposed on the teaching staff of university and government colleges a couple of years ago in an effort to curb a practice which threatened to dilute classroom teaching. According to the Director of Collegiate Education (DCE) Prof Abdul Khayum, a vigilance committee of senior teachers will monitor the implementation of the ban. Private tuition entails additional workload on teachers and diverts professional attention from class-room teaching. But it cannot be wished away through an official order. The tuition syndicate is big business in this State especially at the pre-university level. Conducted in the same college sometimes by the same teachers, these parallel classrooms promise spectacular results to their pupils, for an exorbitant fee in many cases. The result is a sad deterioration of academic standards in the regular classroom where the larger section of the student population suffers. The shockingly poor examination results of this unlucky section bears out this fact. When qualified and competent teachers divert their attention from their regular duties, the loss is felt more by those who cannot afford the luxury of private lessons. Bangalore alone has a large number of such tuition syndicates conducted by eminent teachers and supported by affluent parents.

The All-India Federation of University and College Teachers Organizations (AIFUCTO) has, in its code of professional ethics, specified that teachers should help and guide their students beyond the classroom "without consideration of remuneration or reward." A special committee set up by the University Grants Commission to examine the service conditions of teachers, made a similar recommendation. The DCE and the State Universities could implement these recommendations more effectively by delinking private tuition from public examinations. If teachers who conduct private classes are debarred from acting as examiners or paper-setters, tuition syndicates and tutorials will certainly become devalued.

Institute of Aerospace Medicine Develops LCA Cockpit

92AS0086H Bangalore *DECCAN HERALD* in English
3 Oct 91 p 5

[Text] Bangalore, Oct 2 (PTI). Taking off as a modest center of the Indian Air Force for aeromedical activities in the 50s, the Institute of Aerospace Medicine (IAM) has flown high to play a key role in the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) project.

Handling all human engineering aspects in the design and development of the prestigious project, the institute located here is giving final touches to a suitable cockpit design.

The prototype of the cockpit is expected to be ready very soon before it is put to operational test for final approval, Group Captain K.P. Das, commandant of the institute, told visiting journalists from Delhi.

The IAM determined the cockpit dimension and location of control panels and crucial instruments inside it with the help of valuable anthropometric data of the Indian aircrew collected and analyzed carefully by the institute.

Experts at the institute who deal with the human problems in aviation and space have taken utmost care to ensure that the LCA aircrew is in an optimal state of physical and mental health to achieve operational efficiency as well as to promote flight safety.

Prime Agency: The institute has also been nominated as the prime agency for all human engineering aspects in the development of the Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) which along with the LCA is to be the mainstay of the air force in the 1990s.

Since its inception on May 29, 1957, the IAM has been performing multifarious activities including selection, evaluation and indoctrination of military and civil aircrew, training of medical and paramedical personnel in aviation and space medicine and provision of life support.

The premier institute also undertakes aeromedical consultancy in aircraft design, promotion of flight safety through aircraft accident investigations and aeromedical research.

Exacting: The normal physical, physiological and psychological limits of a healthy man are often stretched to their maximum and beyond when the body is exposed to the environments of upper atmosphere and space, the flight dynamics and the cockpit work space layout.

All these make the medical standards for flying duties critical since any lapse of functional disability which may occur during flying accident. "Here the institute's role in tackling the human problems becomes all the more important," Group Captain Das said.

Assessing the thermal stress in various types of aircraft, the institute has achieved a major breakthrough in developing an efficient miniaturized "liquid cooling system" to minimize the heat loads on aircrew.

The IAM which played a major role in the Indo-Soviet manned space mission, is the only institute of its kind in this part of the world.

Weapons Ingredient Suspected in Bhopal Gas Leak

92AS0148A Madras *THE HINDU* in English
7 Oct 91 p 7

[Article: "Scientist Calls for Research To Unravel Bhopal Gas Mystery"; quotation marks as published]

[Text] Bhopal, Oct. 6. The merits or otherwise of the latest judgment of the Supreme Court in the Bhopal gas tragedy case will be widely debated for the next few weeks until a tangible plan of action for satisfactory relief to the victims emerges from it. There is, however, yet another aspect of the gas disaster which merits the focus of global attention.

Nearly seven long years after the world's biggest industrial disaster, scientists the world over are still groping for a reliable clue to the precise nature of the mysterious gases discharged from the Union Carbide pesticide plant in Bhopal which took a heavy toll of life on a wintry night of December 1984. Although so far generally known as the MIC gas disaster, recent evidence of indigenous research indicates that the tragedy was caused by far more deadly components than methyl isocyanate. Apparently MIC itself was a minor culprit.

In the words of John R. Bucher, who summarises the research work of 29 eminent American scientists in a special issue of *Environment Health Perspectives*, "...while MIC was probably the primary chemical released during the (Bhopal) accident, an as yet undetermined amount of reaction products was also released, perhaps including hydrogen cyanide. No attempt has been made to re-create the accident experimentally to examine effects in animals. The technical difficulties involved and lack of knowledge concerning the composition of the released materials preclude such an approach." That was four years ago.

A research paper by a forensic scientist connected with the tragedy from the first moments of its occurrence on December 2/3, 1984. Dr. Heeresh Chandra throws a flood of light on the complex compounds released into the atmosphere that night. Dr. Heeresh Chandra presented his paper at the 22nd biennial conference of the Indian Council of Social Welfare held in Bhopal.

According to him, it is an understatement to call it Bhopal gas tragedy. It should be regarded as 'Bhopal aerosol disaster' as a mysterious mixture of gases, vapours, and particulate matter—40 tonnes of it—was discharged from the killer tank No. 610 of the pesticide plant.

"Like Pompei suddenly engulfed in the dust of Vesuvius, like Hiroshima," says Ivor Doney, president of Coroners' Surgeons of the United Kingdom, "Bhopal was pervaded by a cloud of poisonous fumes, killing 70 people by 7 a.m., 260 by 9 a.m. and nearly 3,000 over subsequent months." Doney's remarks came after a 'stunning' presentation of a

paper on the disaster by Dr. Heeresh Chandra at the third Indo-Pacific Forensic Congress at Madras in September 1989.

Casualty figure: Although officially the casualty figure has since been placed at some 3,800, going mainly by the mortuary and compensation cases, Dr. Heeresh Chandra estimates that the actual figure of the dead might have been anywhere between 8,000 and 9,000 besides tens of thousands maimed, injured or disabled. These figures are by and large corroborated by a number of voluntary agencies engaged in rescue work and approximate count of bodies at cremation and burial grounds during those grim weeks.

Since the introduction of the monthly interim compensation of Rs. 200 about 15 months ago 159 persons have died among the beneficiaries, giving a broad indication that ten persons might be losing their life every month. This is, however, only a tentative thumb rule estimate as it is known that all the recipients of the monthly interim compensation are not necessarily among those gravely affected by the gas leakage.

Verdict hailed: Dr. Heeresh Chandra, the principal investigator into the forensic aspects of the gas tragedy under a research project of the Indian Council of Medical Research, welcomes the Supreme Court's verdict quashing the criminal immunity of the Union Carbide. He is happy that "money has not been allowed to compound criminal cases and compromise with criminal liability." A good part of his deposition before the Supreme Court as also of his research paper at the Indian Council of Social Welfare is a stunning indictment of Union Carbide and its influential lobby within the highest echelons of the country for their alleged persistent efforts to thwart the investigations at various stages.

According to him, no other poisonous gas in the world in an open atmosphere in the circumstances it escaped could produce such mortality and morbidity as this mysterious gas. He told the Supreme Court: "Whatever may have been the cause of the Bhopal gas disaster we are afraid that the knowledge acquired from its effect on human health and life will generally be utilised to develop this as a potential weapon."

Reasons: He cites several reasons for his conviction, the most potent among them: the fact that there was enormous activity by foreign scientists to know more and more about it from various agencies at an enormous cost and through a large variety of experiments. But significantly, nay ominously, nothing of it has come back, not even a single line of treatment. "I dare give a note of warning as a scientist with a commonsense," he avers.

It is customary, obligatory and ethical, according to him, that when a chemical is permitted to be made, its toxicity—either in case of an accident or otherwise—must be known, and immediate and remote treatment, with signs and symptoms, must be prescribed and printed. Regrettably there was nothing of the kind in this case. The faith of the people is shaken in the casual grant of licenses by the

(State) Government to an industry which does not spell out the consequences of an accident, sabotage, or wilful triggering of a disaster which was no less disastrous than Hiroshima or Nagasaki, he affirms.

The comparison with Hiroshima is quite relevant, he says. The only difference is that massive medical aid and rehabilitation of the Japanese victims were arranged by the 'offending country' and damage monitored to know how to treat themselves if their own country (United States) was similarly invaded. The primary act in Hiroshima was deliberate to break the will of the enemy in war time and responsibility owned—unlike in peace time Bhopal where 'criminality' is being 'disowned' and is being even blamed on 'sabotage.'

He hints that the scientist of a particular country even expressed it to him in so many words that the Bhopal people were victims of a 'chemical war' and as such he would like to collect all the data in all the fields including human studies for a prolonged period.

A winner of the B.C. Roy national award for speciality in forensic science and founder-director of the Medico-Legal Institute, claimed to be the only one of its kind in the country, Dr. Heeresh Chandra retired recently but continues with his work on Bhopal gas research project but in a somewhat 'truncated position.' Passionately attached to his research work, he makes an impassioned plea for unbridled research in investigation to unravel the mystery of the Bhopal gas tragedy for the cause of humanity if for nothing else.

Composite Culture Exposed, 'Exclusivism' Condemned

92SA0065E Secunderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE
in English 20 Sep 91 p 6

[Article by Arving N. Das]

[Text] The disintegration of the Soviet Union offers a sobering warning to Indians. That empire was after all cobbled by centuries of absolutist Czardom and was held together for the last seventy years by the ideals of socialism as well as the power of an overarching state. By contrast, India exists on the basis of a soft state, a weak ideal and fragile institutions. Hence, the dangers to its unity are far greater.

At present, there are two alternative modes of defining India. One is based on a constitution, carefully crafted by an elite which adopted the premises of modernity. The other, which is no less elitist and fortunately up to now not predominant, is supposedly based on the nationalistic manifestation of Hindutva. The first has the brittleness of a devised structure, the second has the degenerative character of organic matter. In fact the second is not even totally organic. It too has a synthetic nature, such as that of artificial compounds, which chemists created in their laboratories as an imitation of naturally produced urine, the first successful experiment bridging inorganic and organic chemistry.

Composite Culture

The first, modernistic view is limited by the idealistic but false Nehruvian assumptions of the existence in India of a composite culture. This well-intentioned myth was propagated by Jawaharlal Nehru through his *Discovery of India*. It has been perpetuated by naive part-time historians, like Mr Mani Shankar Aiyar, who see the symbol of a Ustad Bismillah Khan playing the shehnai in the Vishwanath temple at Varanasi and close their eyes to the substance of the notice outside the same temple, noted by the Janata Dal MP [member of Parliament] Mr Rajnath Sonkar Shastri, barring entry to untouchables and malechhas. In their undoubtedly laudable attempt to create a wholesome concept of India, many Left nationalist historians, too, have made the mistake of taking Jawaharlal Nehru's historiographical exercise as indeed a discovery of the past when it was in fact an invention for the future.

Both Nehru and, much more clearly, B.R. Ambedkar realized that India did not exist as a nation. What they were promoting was a vision of a nation-in-the-making, a new formation shaped by republican ideals and cast in the mould of a modernistic Constitution. Ambedkar was explicit on this issue. In believing that we are a nation, we are chasing a great delusion. We can only attempt to become a nation-in-the-making, he wrote on the eve of the drafting the Constitution.

On the other side of the ideological divide, the primordialists who were, and are, opposed to modernist ideals, were much more certain about their conceptualization of India as an exclusivist Hindu nation. In their view, the monolithic unity was represented, as Golwalkar wrote in 1947, by one culture, one language, one nation—Hindu, Hindi, Hindustan. He was elaborating the idea put forward by the most articulate theorist of Hindu exclusivism, Savarkar, who held in his *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, published as late as 1949, that Muslims constituted a separate nation and gladly accepted the partition of India. It is not wrong to see Savarkar and Golwalkar as the flip side of Jinnah.

Serious history however finds it difficult to accept either the starry-eyed concept of latter-day Nehruvians of an idyllic composite culture or the steely-eyed bigotry of the advocates of Hindutva whose theory is premised on a perennial conflict between mutually antagonistic religious communities.

Separate communities did exist in India and they met only occasionally. The very absence of civil society, as Dirk Kolff has shown in his detailed 1990 study, Naukar, Rajput and Sepoy, allowed at best a back-to-back existence of communities. There was some intermingling of cultures and music, art, food and several other elements of life did evolve with a degree of compositeness. The most interesting aspect of this, however, lies in the incorporation of the caste system among Muslims, pointing to the essentially fragmented nature of Hindu society itself rather than inter-community compositeness. Even in medieval times Manu and Mandal were more important than mandirs and masjids.

The redeeming feature was the existence of what Prof Sudipto Kaviraj has called fuzzy communities, discrete groupings, but with neither internal cohesion nor well-known externalities, and, as such, the presence of communities without overt communalism. If a group did not know how far it extended and what was its strength in numbers, it was not likely to have an acute and aggressive self-awareness.

Blissful State

Colonialism changed that blissful state of social ignorance. Enumeration and categorization for reasons of state had a deep social impact. Middleton, the superintendent of the 1921 census, said, we pigeonholed everyone by caste and community. We deplore its effect on social and economic problems but we are largely responsible for the system we deplore. Government's passions for labels and pigeonholes has led to crystallization and fragmentation.

The moving finger of the census taker wrote and, having write, moved on. But the subaltern colonized mind, subject to the hegemony of the numerate, accepted the divisions as real and material. Once numbers had been counted and the tally was taken as the truth it became a political tool. Hindus were told that they constituted a majority and an effort was made to persuade them to act as a uniform community.

Today's Hindutva has its ancestry in that synthetic creation of organic entity. And now, within the context of democratic politics, it seeks to turn numerical majority into political majoritarianism, thereby subverting democracy itself. While democracy is based on the majority-minority dichotomy, it is also given strength by the existence of pluralisms which make for a kaleidoscopic shifting of those patterns. A person may think in one context that he belongs to a majority community but he may also be part of a minority in terms of caste, region, language or political persuasion. It is this which moderates majority rule within democracy.

The danger of Hindutva as the defining principle of Indian nationhood is that it seeks to create and perpetuate a permanent majority, one based on an artificial and homogenized Hinduism. The destruction by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad of the many small temples of the little tradition, including shrines dedicated to the Monkey-God Bajrangbali, around the Babri Masjid in order to build the grand designer temple of Ram, diminishes the rich variety of Hinduism itself. It encroaches upon sacred space, disregards sacred time as the Shankaracharya of Dwarakapeeth has asserted, disrupts sacred tradition and destroys, through calendar art, sacred iconography of even the maryada purshottam saumya (tranquil) Ram by imposing an invented raudra (warrior) Ram.

The juggernaut of such a Hindutva tries to steam roller over not only religious minorities but even pluralities within Hinduism. That is why it is scared of Mandal.

On the other side, the modernists too try to fashion an India on the basis of wishful thinking, a centralizing, homogenizing, westernized state-shaping society. Even that is a half-hearted attempt. Tired proponents of the Nehruvian notion of the state determining the nation, like Prof Ravinder Kumar, now speak not of the nation-state but of a civilization-state which evokes shades of Hindutva.

Both are fundamentally flawed because they are not premised on a realistic appreciation of the nature of either society or the state, while society is essentially characterized by particularities, specificities, diversities and pluralities, the state today has effectively declared itself bankrupt. A nation cannot be forged by either those who limit themselves by eager religious ghettoization of their minds, or by mere pragmatists who cut the coat of national pride and policies according to the cloth, grudgingly supplied by international bankers.

Ideal for Indians

India as to be invented. But the invention has to be, first and foremost, of an ideal for Indians. This ideal can only be equity, participation, plurality. Otherwise, static instruments with gravitational disequilibrium will crumble and organic unities which do not account for living particularities will putrefy.

India was invented by its constitution-makers to conform to an ideal of democracy, social change and equity. The ideal has got subverted by status quoism, over-centralization and sectarianism. The votaries of homogenized Hindutva are eroding the idealism on the one side. On the other, weak-kneed pragmatists, bending with the prevailing economic wind, are undermining national autonomy and hence the very concept of nationhood. This is a dangerous situation. For, if the ideals around which India has been fashioned to go, India cannot survive.

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